

SHOES & ACCESSORIES

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TRENDS
MARKETING
RETAILING



Brand Watch

In the beginning comes the last:
THE ASTORMUELLER STORY
Shine Your Shoes Like a PRO

Leader Speaks

Anupam Bansal: Moving In The Right Direction
Ishaan Sachdeva: Staying Ahead Of The Curve
Aqeel Ahmed: Marketing to the Affluent

Woman Entrepreneurs

"GO LIVE YOUR DREAM"
RATAN KAUL—A PUBLIC DIPLOMAT

Trade Event | AIFW AW '17

MINIMALISM— THE BIGGEST TREND
AMAZON INDIA FASHION WEEK AUTUMN/WINTER 2017

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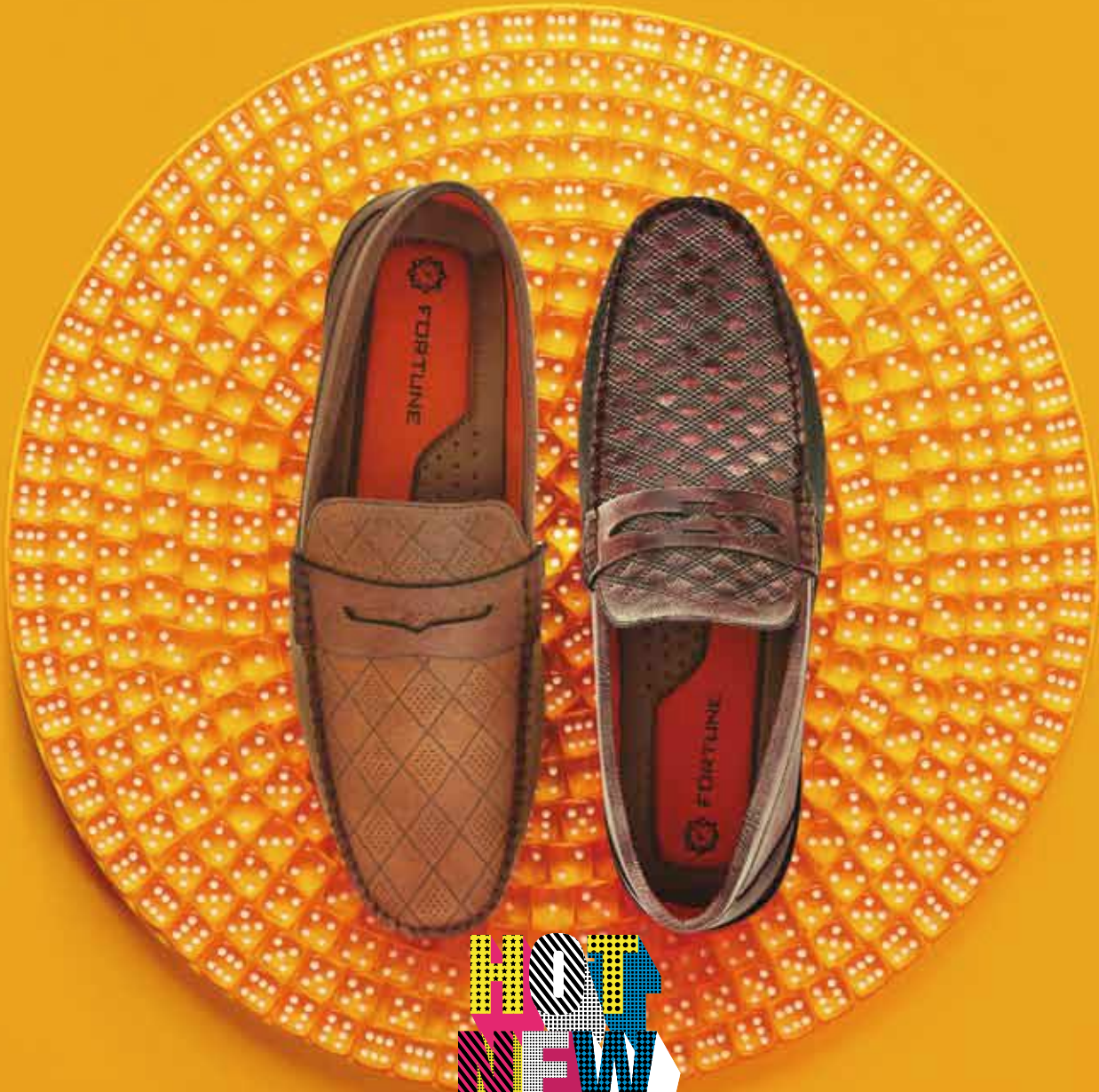
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Editor's Letter

The Indian retail industry is expected to grow to \$ 1.3 trillion by 2020, registering a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 16.7 per cent over 2015-20. Healthy economic growth, changing demographic profile, increasing disposable incomes, urbanisation, changing consumer tastes and preferences are the other factors driving growth in the organised retail market in India.

Increasing participation from global and private players has given a boost to the industry. Global retailers such as Walmart and GAP are increasing their sourcing from India and are moving from third-party buying offices to establishing their own.

The Government has introduced reforms to attract FDI in retail industry. It has approved 51 % per cent FDI in multi-brand retail and increased FDI limit to 100% in single brand retail, and plans to allow 100 per cent FDI in e-commerce, under the arrangement that the products sold must be manufactured in India to gain from the liberalised regime.

In this backdrop, Future Group, one of the major retailers in the food and fashion segments, announced that it plans to grow by 30 per each year, its CEO Kishore Biyani was quoted. "The fashion business of the group across the various retail brands will grow 30 per cent every year," Biyani remarked.

The atmosphere is the clear indication the huge and vibrant market is big enough for everyone and there is room for growth.

AMITABH TANEJA
Editor-in-Chief

The
ENCHANTED
collection



Disney
**BEAUTY
AND THE
BEAST**
MARCH 17

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amitabh taneja

managing editor
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publisher
s p taneja

associate publisher
dipika chopra

creative
creative head **hariom sharma**

marketing & advertising
marketing head **aditya kumar**

production
general manager **manish kadam**
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circulation
logistics support **shyam singh**

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CIN: U72400DL2009PTC186578

Delhi: 123, 1st floor, Tribhuvan Complex, Ishwar Nagar, Mathura Raod, New Delhi-110 065,
India, Ph: +91-11-42486820

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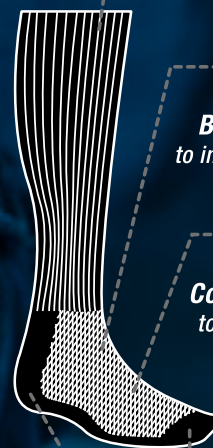
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irritation



Extra Padded Sole
to protect your feet
from injury



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Hidesign to open six more outlets



Dilip Kapur, Hidesign

Pondicherry-based premium leather goods maker Hidesign is looking to triple revenues by 2021. The company reported a revenue of ₹100 crores and a profit of ₹2.4 crores in financial year 2016. It plans to open six new outlets at airports in the next two months. These will be three new stores in Delhi and three new in Kolkata. India accounts for 80 per cent of Hidesign's revenue. The company currently operates 74 stores in India, of which 10 are located at airports.

The brand launched its footprint in Kenya, Saudi Arabia and Canada, to name some. The Pondicherry factory was

established in 1990. In 1997, Hidesign opened its first international store in Moscow. Followed by entry into emerging markets of South Africa, South and South East Asia in 1998, and finally in 1999, it entered India.

An extensive range of classic small leather goods and a constantly changing range of fashion accessories complement the handbags. Hidesign's ranges of classic and casual belts are made out of full grain cowhide and solid brass buckles. It has just collaborated with Disney to release a limited-edition handbag collection inspired by the movie, and all we can see are Beauty and the Beast motifs everywhere.

The 'Enchanted' collection by Hidesign follows on the heels of Disney's collaboration with Kenzo for The Jungle Book last year. Rose motifs and illustrated patches adorn this new 30-piece collection, featuring an array of satchels, handbags and clutches.

DUKE BAGS "THE MIDAS TOUCH" AWARD



Komal Kumar Jain, chairman Duke Fashions (India) Ltd., has been honored with "The Midas Touch Award" for outstanding entrepreneurship by the Governor of Punjab V.P. Singh Badnore. The award aims to recognize leading entrepreneurs across the region to spur greater innovation, fair practices and growth in entrepreneurship. It hopes to be a platform to encourage continued leadership towards sustainable economic development for the region.

Komal believes that entrepreneurship is a metrics between risk and reward. And he will continue to take measured risks and reward will automatically accrue if the intent is right. He shows great entrepreneurship spirit in leading, growing and contributing to their organization, community and country.

He said, "Duke's vision is to passionately satisfy the Indian consumer's needs in fashion, life style and value, across wearing occasions, in apparels, footwear

and accessories, by anticipating trends and creating markets with the ultimate purpose of delivering superior value to the customers." He further added that they are improving not only the productivity and quality of our industrial goods but also of our entrepreneurial talent through innovations.

Duke has also achieved the "Make in India -National Productivity & Innovation Award" in Textiles & Garments Sector. It has been conferred with president award; Two national awards i.e Excellent Quality Readymade Garments and Outstanding Entrepreneurship, crowned with Indian Power Brand at Power Brand Glam at Las Vegas, USA. The brand has an unbeatable marketing network comprising of over 4000 multi brand outlets and Over 360 exclusive stores across major cities in India. Moreover the products are also exclusively placed at big chain stores and on online portals.

India's ecommerce cos take on Amazon and Alibaba

"What we need to do is what China did and tell the world: we need your capital, but we don't need your companies," Sachin Bansal, the co-founder of Flipkart said.

It highlighted the battle in Indian ecommerce between homegrown companies and Amazon.

Since launching its Indian operation, Amazon has enjoyed rapid market share gains at the expense of local leaders Flipkart and Snapdeal, with each of the three burning through tens of millions of dollars a month as competition intensified.

The tussle reflects the potential for growth: Indian ecommerce sales are forecast to rise from \$10bn in 2015 to \$47bn in 2020, predicts eMarketer, a US research group.

Now Bansal faces another challenge from the Chinese technology group Alibaba, which is investing \$177m into the ecommerce business of PayTM.

Separately to their investment in the ecommerce business, Alibaba and Ant this week bought an additional \$250m of shares in PayTM from existing shareholders, according to a person with knowledge of the transaction.

Rohit Bansal, Snapdeal co-founder, said last year that the slowdown was healthy for the industry and that there would "always be money available" for companies pursuing a sustainable business plan.

But last month he opted to forgo his salary indefinitely, as the company moved to axe 600 jobs, having suffered falling market share since it raised funds at a \$6.5bn valuation in February last year.

Flipkart has not raised money since August 2015, when it undertook a \$700m funding round at a valuation of \$15bn. Last September it held talks with Walmart on a possible stake sale and this year has reportedly held discussions with Microsoft and Alibaba rival Tencent.

In the area of mobile electronics — which account for one-third of Indian ecommerce sales — Flipkart enjoyed a bounce in the final quarter of last year, helped by strong sales of some Chinese smartphones for which it had exclusive distribution rights, according to analysts at Counterpoint Research.

Amazon last year rolled out its Prime fast delivery service in India, as well as a limited initial launch of a grocery service that promises goods within two hours — betting on the belief that Indian shoppers increasingly value convenience and quality of service as much as low prices.

Lok Sabha passes the Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI) Bill

The Lok Sabha passed the Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI) Bill, 2017 negating all the amendments moved by the Opposition members paving the way for giving FDDI a stature of national level institutes like IIMs and IITs. Replying to the debate, Commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said through this Bill, five more national level Footwear Design and Development Institutes (FDDI) will be set up making the total number of institutes to 12 which will provide much needed training and facilities to the students of the leather industry. She made it clear that as of now, there was no intention to increase further the number of the institutes. Already there are seven FDDIs in different parts of the country where more than 3,900 students are enrolled. The headquarters of FDDI is in Noida. The Bill has provision to provide degrees and post graduate degrees by the FDDIs.

"The global footwear market is expected to reach \$ 220.2 billion by 2020 from the current level of \$ 198.7 billion. The opportunity cost of not investing in human resources required for this sector in India at this juncture would result in increased imports, thereby impacting the domestic and exports sector of footwear and leather products," Sitharaman said.

The bill proposes that FDDI shall be established as a body corporate. The existing institute is centrally-funded for meeting its capital expenditure.

The institute shall consist of a governing council having a chairperson who shall be an eminent academician, scientist or industrialist from the leather sector, to be nominated by the central government.

The central government shall have the power to remove the chairperson or other members or reconstitute the governing council, if it considers it appropriate to do so.

To enable the institute to discharge its functions efficiently, the central government may, after appropriation made by Parliament by law in this behalf, pay to the institute in each financial year sums of money in a manner it deems fit.

The institute shall nurture and promote quality and excellence in education and research in the areas of footwear and leather products design and development and allied fields.

It will develop and conduct courses leading to graduate and post graduate degrees, doctoral and post-doctoral courses and research in the areas of footwear and leather products design and development and allied



fields thereof. The institute will undertake research, survey and studies and application thereof, for improved quality and design, testing and international marketing.

The institute will conduct skill development programmes and provide technical assistance to artisans, craftsmen, manufacturers, designers and exporters.

It will also develop an international centre for creation and transmission of information, with a focus on educational, professional and industrial commitments.

The Footwear Design and Development Institute was established in 1986 with the objective of providing skilled human resource to the leather sector.

JAPJEE GROUP Making The Case For Kids To Have An Entrepreneurship Education



Children want to know how everything is made: planes, cars, candy, buildings and perhaps even the shoes they are wearing. What better place to learn about an object's origins than by visiting the place where it's made? Though today social apps and net are an amazing source for watching everyday objects being created, baked or bolted together, but nothing

beats actually looking across a factory floor with your own eyes. There's something fascinating about the recurrence of people and machines in harmonization. Japjee group hosted a factory tour for 150 students of St. Dominics Sr. Sec School, Mathura to their manufacturing unit.

"The tour to the shoe factory was an enthralling visit for the children. The

youngsters enjoyed the outing, despite the journey from Mathura. We led the group through displays showing the company's humble beginning as a footwear maker. Then it was on to the manufacturing division. It was very exciting for the kids to see how uppers are stitched, shoes lasted, boxed and packed off on conveyor belts." said Opinder Singh, MD Japjee Group. He added, "As a company manufacturing and selling shoes under its own brands – 13 reasons & Hevit london, we were pleased to be able to make a contribution to high school education. We decided to provide them with an opportunity to observe the production facility at our plant located on the premises of Japjee group. This was an exceptional event; ordinary visitors are normally not allowed to enter the plant."

Future group fashion business to grow by 30%: Kishore Biyani

Major retailers in the food and fashion segments Future Group plans to grow the latter by 30 per cent each year, CEO of the group Kishore Biyani said. "The fashion business of the group across the various retail brands will grow 30 per cent every year."

He said by the end of March 2018, revenue from the fashion business will touch ₹10,000 crore, adding that by 2021, the group would sell 80 crore garments.

The group has brands like FBB, Planet Sports, All, Brand Factory and Central in the fashion segment, which constitutes 45 per cent of the group's total revenue.

Biyani said the group would set up 300 FBB stores across the country and 80 by March 2018.

He said that going by scale which the group has achieved in the fashion business, prices of garments would be reduced by two to three per cent each year.



Under Armour starts retail on Amazon India

US-based sports performance brand Under Armour is now on Amazon Fashion. Under Armour focuses on cutting edge design and innovation with more than 300 styles. The brand offers apparels and footwear for both men and women. The products are made of premium apparel technology, such as Threadborne and Charged Cotton, designed to keep athletes cooler, dryer and lighter throughout the course of a game, practice or workout.

Premium footwear innovations include UA Speed Form for precision fit, Charged Cushioning for responsiveness, durability, optimal cushioning and energy return, and Micro G for increased protection and

stabilisation. Two decades back Under Armour started with an idea to make a sweat-wicking T-shirt. It is now endorsed by the world's top athletes.

Under Armour has chosen Lectra as an official partner for its manufacturing and design center, the Lighthouse, which opened in the US. The new facility will showcase the latest technology and serve as an incubator for creating state-of-the-art product with efficient manufacturing methods.

Amazon Fashion has exclusive partnerships with brands either for the entire range that a brand offers or for specific product lines or collections that they choose to launch on Amazon, which last for six months to a couple of years.



Benetton unveils women empowerment campaign

Benetton has launched a campaign supporting women's empowerment. It aims to mobilise people to think, talk and act in ways that support the empowerment of women.

India is Benetton's biggest market outside Italy, and the brand is particularly popular among men, who are a key target of the new campaign, which seeks to persuade them to recognize women as equal partners and highlight the need for genuine equality.

Promoting gender equality and women's safety as the priority, Benetton is executing key elements of its global sustainability roadmap, the 'Women Empowerment Program', a long-term Benetton Group sustainability program aimed at supporting the empowerment of women worldwide.

The brand caters to the 18 to 35 age group but it also has different segments like young and trendy, young professionals, thriving middle class and loyalists between 35 and

45 years. Ninety per cent of the production happens in India. The brand has plants in Ludhiana, Mansear, Bangalore and Chennai. An in-house design team keeps travelling around the world to understand trends and does some customization and localisation to match the country's needs. The brand will explore territories like innerwear, footwear and accessories.



Woodland to enter China with Aokang

Woodland, the maker of footwear, apparels and accessories, has formed a partnership that will allow it to sell products in about 5,000 retail outlets in China.

In a move aimed at globalising its brand, Woodland has tied up with Aokang International to sell footwear manufactured at its plants in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh at the Chinese company's multi-brand outlets.

In the first phase starting in May, Aokang, which has over 5,000 brand stores and owns five footwear brands, will stock Woodland shoes in 150 outlets.

"After testing the market with 150 stores, we shall scale up stocks by September and be available in Aokang stores across China," said Harkirat Singh, managing director at Woodland.

Woodland will step up production at all

three manufacturing units and plans to invest 15%-20% of its annual revenue — ₹1,200 crore in 2016-17 — to manufacture footwear for the Aokang stores.

Woodland already sells its products in about 1,000 stores globally, including in Hong Kong, Russia and Dubai. That figure will increase to 6,000 stores once it starts sales at all Aokang stores.

"The collaboration helps Aokang to expand existing business scope and channels," said Zhentao Wang, chairman at Aokang International. "It is also good for the company's long-term planning and development needed to grow in the global market."

Woodland will also offer Aokang footwear at its outlets in India and its online platform. The company plans similar collaborations in some South African countries and Canada.

Crocs aims to double India business in 3 years

US-headquartered footwear brand Crocs is looking at doubling its India business in 3 years as it widens product portfolio and expands retail footprint.

"We are growing at over 35 per cent year-on-year. In terms of outlook, we will be doubling our India business in 3 years. We will achieve this through widening our product portfolio and geographic expansion," Crocs India Managing Director Deepak Chhabra told .

He further said: "We are looking at expanding beyond our core beachwear offerings. We plan to expand our brand to a pure casual footwear brand. Over 4-5 years, we want to be a larger player in the casual footwear category and capture 10 per cent market share."

The company, which does not share its financial numbers, globally sold 55 million pairs of shoes in 2016. It sold 1.5 million pairs in India last year.

At present, the company has 1,000 points of sales including over 35 exclusive stores.

"We plan to open 50 standalone stores this calendar year. Going forward, standalone stores will be an important growth channel for us. We want to expand our retail network in East and North-East part of the country," he added.

Crocs operates in over 90 countries around the world and offers casual footwear for men, women and children.



H&M adds another store in Bangalore

Bangalore has just got its second H&M store. Here customers will be able to shop across two floors of fashion inspiration and timeless classics for the whole family. Spread over 18,000 square feet, the new store continues to feature H&M's garment collecting initiative, where customers can donate their used clothes and get a discount voucher to use for their next purchase at H&M.

Mumbai has three H&M stores. The brand launched its store in Chennai last year and will be opening its first store in Hyderabad this summer. The retailer also has stores in Delhi, Punjab and Pune. Swedish fashion retailer H&M is known for fashion and quality at the best price in a sustainable way.

Globally, H&M had 3,970 stores as of February and plans to open 425 more by November. The company is the world's second-biggest clothing retailer by sales after Zara's parent Inditex of Spain. Founded in 1947, H&M is a pioneer of design collaborations with style icons such as Karl Lagerfeld, Stella.



Language



Income tax raids on Agra footwear community

Hardly a few weeks go by without the local newspapers carrying upsetting headlines about tax raids on footwear business houses & trade establishments in Agra. Today, the list of people raided on allegations of 'economic offence' read like a absolute who's who of the sector. The spate of income tax raids has angered the business community as the last intrusion took away the life the septuagenarian, Moti Lal Daultani. On 24th March, Income Tax department sleuths conducted raid at the manufacturing plant, godown & store of an eminent shoe manufacturer & exporter Valentino Shoes.

Whether the Government's motivation is a dextral or sinister exercise, in this particular case it was devastating for the Daultani family. Chander Daultani, Motilal's son has filed a criminal case against the department. Chander talks slowly but firmly and although he doesn't say so in so many words, is obviously cut up over the treatment meted out to his father by the Department. He stated that , "During the incursion, authorization was

shown to me and forcefully my signature was obtained thereon. The authorization was on pre-printed Form wherein name of the Company was written by Pen. Finding it unusual, I asked the officer to show me the authorization, which was printed and signed without any name of Party to be surveyed. I confronted that it is not legal to use a blank authorization, the Officer snatched it and on my insistence to retain it, made a physical assault which caused immense hurt – physical as well mental to my father." As per Chander the behavior and conduct of Surveying Officers was much below which is expected from the Central Government Officers dealing with Income Tax payers.

The sheer intensity, frequency, and size of the raids conducted during the past year, and their targets - often regarded as the doyens of enlightened footwear industrialisation - has sent shock waves of consternation, confusion, bitterness and demoralisation throughout the business community.



UP leather industry on tenterhooks

Possible action against illegal slaughterhouses in Uttar Pradesh is keeping the UP leather industry on tenterhooks.

In its UP Vision Document, the BJP had promised it would shut down illegal and mechanised abattoirs in the state if it came to power. With Yogi Adityanath as chief minister, things are likely to get the head-start.

There are about 45 licensed, mechanised slaughterhouses in UP operating in the private sector, with most units having the beef export licence.

The UP Pollution Control Board (UPPCB) has started drawing up a list of abattoirs that are flouting the norms or operating without the licence.

There are a large number of illegal slaughterhouses and those operated manually in the state, especially in the western districts. Although there are no comprehensive figures on this, they provide employment to almost 50,000 people. UP has

three major leather industry hubs — Kanpur- Unnao, Agra and Noida. Half the leather industry's revenues come from abroad, according to him. The state accounts for almost a third of India's annual leather trade and exports.

"There would be no immediate impact on the state leather industry if action is taken against illegal slaughterhouses, but we have to see how the situation unfolds," the former regional head of the Council for Leather Exports (CLE), RK Jalan, was quoted.

He said such measures were not uncommon and countries like Brazil had taken similar steps to check the depletion of livestock giving milk. Meanwhile, CLE Regional Chairman Javed Iqbal said the Council was watching the situation.

"We hope that only defaulting slaughterhouses are targeted, else it would certainly hit the supply of raw hide for the leather goods industry," he said.



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Puma runs into losses after 3 years of profit

German sportswear maker Puma has run into losses in India again after three years of making profit, according to its filings with the Registrar of Companies (ROC). Puma India reported a loss of ₹3.6 crore and sales of ₹921.2 crore for January-December 2016. It reported profits of ₹29 crore in 2014 and ₹12 crore in 2015. As per the report in economic times "We have made investments in technology worth ₹120 crore. We are building Puma.com to sell directly to customers," said a senior executive of Puma India, who did not wish to be quoted. "Sales on online marketplaces are slowing down." Around 18% of Puma India's sales take place online. Last year, it got the government nod for a 100% single-brand entity in India, for a wide range of retail options, including e-commerce. "Last year has been tough," said a top industry executive. "Business had just started to pick up during the second half of the year and then demonetisation struck. Second part of the year is when sportswear firms do around 60% of their business." Puma recently signed up cricket skipper Virat Kohli as brand ambassador for ₹100 crore. Nike and Adidas have been consolidating their businesses here.



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Burberry Brings in Design Head for Accessories and Sr VP

Christopher Bailey is fortifying the creative team at Burberry with two senior appointments in key growth areas. Sabrina Bonesi will become design director, leather goods and shoes, a new role. Bonesi, a leather-goods expert who previously worked for Dior, will be responsible for men's and women's bags, shoes and accessories.

In July, Bailey will relinquish his ceo role and take on the new title of president while remaining chief creative officer. Marco Gobetti, who joined Burberry in January as executive chairman, Asia-Pacific and Middle East, will take over as ceo in July.

In January, Bailey added another senior executive to the team, Claudia Plant, a Net-a-porter cofounder who had been with that company since its inception. Plant served as global brand creative director at the Net-a-porter Group until last December.

Plant's title at Burberry is senior vice president, brand experience. Hers is also a new role and she will report directly to Bailey. She is working across online and offline channels, and her remit is to bring fashion and products to life for customers, and help to establish a strong editorial voice that will support brand and product initiatives.

The appointments are a clear indicator that Bailey remains committed to the brand

and that fresh creative blood is key to Burberry's future in a changing climate for luxury goods. Other creative appointments are understood to be in the works.

Against a backdrop of slowing demand, changing tourist flows and consumer habits, Bailey outlined an austerity plan in May aimed at saving 100 million pounds, or \$123 million, by 2019. As part of the plan, the company has been streamlining operations and slashing the number of products on offer.

Burberry's overarching strategy is to outstrip luxury market growth, which is projected to be 2 to 3 percent in coming years.

Since the plan was unveiled, Burberry has been simplifying operations, cutting costs and shifting the retail focus away from tourists to locals and a younger, digitally engaged customer base. The company has also been reducing its product assortment in a bid to clarify its offer in customers' eyes, and to emphasize "fashion and newness" in the collections.

Of his and Gobetti's future roles, Bailey has said: "I will focus more specifically on design, the products, creativity, architecture, marketing, communication, experiences. He will focus more on the operational side,

finance, retail and merchandising. I see this really as two pieces working together. We will jointly lead all the strategies and people."

Accessories is Burberry's largest product category, accounting for nearly 40 percent of revenue in the first half of fiscal 2016-17. At reported exchange rates, the category grew by 8 percent, year-on-year, to 426 million pounds, or \$588 million.



Future's First Sneaker Collaboration Is Out

Future is continuing to make headlines with the release of his first-ever Reebok sneaker collaboration.

The Freebandz x Reebok Zoku Runner features the branding of Future's record label, Freebandz, which also includes artists such as Metro Boomin and Young Scooter.

The sneaker of choice for this collaboration is the Zoku Runner, which made its debut earlier this month. Reebok used digital knitting technology, which it calls Ultraknit, to give the Zoku Runner a lightweight, sock-like fit. The shoe is cushioned with a DMX Lite midsole, while a high abrasion rubber outsole adds both durability and traction.

Future's vision of the runner includes a two-tone black-based knit upper with white contrast threading. It also includes Freebandz branding at the heel, liner, and collar. A white DMX Lite midsole adds an additional layer of contrast, while the outsole has a marbled pattern.

Future's partnership with Reebok was announced last year. He's since been the face of several sneaker releases including the "Overbranded" InstaPump Fury, but this Zoku Runner is the first official collaboration to come out of the endorsement deal.



Hermès Net Profit Jumps to \$1.22 bn

Hermès International's net profit rose 13 percent in 2016 to \$1.22 billion, representing 21.2 percent of sales.

The maker of Birkin bags and silk scarves reported recurring operating income rose 10 percent to \$1.88 billion. Its operating margin stood at 32.6 percent of sales, up from 31.8 percent in 2015 – in line with the company's target and reflecting the favorable impact of foreign currency hedges.

As reported, Hermès posted record sales in 2016 and confirmed its "ambitious" goal for revenue growth this year, adding to evidence of a recovery in the luxury sector. Revenues rose 7.4 percent at constant exchange rates to \$5.75 billion, in 2016.

Growth in 2016 was below the 8 percent recorded the previous year, and at its lowest level since 2009. Nonetheless, Hermès has performed better than many of its competitors, which are struggling to adjust to a decline in demand from China, which accounts for one in three luxury purchases worldwide.

The performance was in line with the French luxury firm's prediction that revenue growth in 2016 could be below its medium-term goal of 8 percent at constant exchange rates "owing to the economic, geopolitical and monetary uncertainties around the world."



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Nike's Profit rises 20 %, But Sales Miss the Mark

Oregon-based Nike has reported a mixed bag of third-quarter earnings results: Its profit blew past forecasts while its sales fell short, albeit slightly.

The athletic giant's Q3 profit climbed 20 percent, to \$1.14 billion, or 68 cents per share, significantly surpassing Wall Street's bets for earnings per diluted share of 53 cents.

Revenues, on the other hand, advanced 5 percent year-over-year, to \$8.4 billion, but missed analysts' expectations for revenues of \$8.5 billion.

Nike chairman, president and CEO Mark Parker said the firm delivered "another solid quarter of growth and profitability" but is seeking to ramp up its efforts through innovation.

"To expand our leadership and ignite Nike's next phase of growth, we're delivering a relentless flow of innovation through performance and style, increasing speed throughout the business and creating more direct connections with consumers leveraging digital and membership," Parker said in a release.

In the face of intensifying competition from Adidas, in particular, several analysts had started to temper their expectations for Nike in recent quarters.

"Nike's stock is up 13 percent year-to-date on expectations that it will regain its footing and re-accelerate its revenue growth," Lyon wrote in a March 17 memo. "However, we believe it will not be until spring '18 at the earliest when we [will] see a material improvement in its assortment that can compete with Adidas' strong offering."

Meanwhile, Susquehanna Financial Group analyst Sam Poser, rating Nike a buy, said he continues to expect a stellar performance from the athletic footwear and apparel leader.

"Nike innovation is robust, value has been enhanced and engagement is improving," Poser wrote on March 15. "Nike is marrying performance and lifestyle attributes in a way that resonates deeply. 3Q17 marks an inflection for revenue and futures."

As expected, Nike did not provide its futures orders tally in its initial earnings

release today. (Futures orders — a calculation of merchandise the company has committed to delivering to retailers during the next six months — are a unique measure for Nike and have long been regarded as a key indicator of its growth.)

In tandem with weakening futures last September, the company told investors that it would change how it reports futures results. Instead of reporting futures as a standalone metric in its earnings releases, as it had done up until that point, it will now just include them in U.S. Securities and Exchange filings and discuss them on quarterly conference calls with investors.



Nike to Honour Cristiano Ronaldo With New Air Force 1s

Portuguese footballer Cristiano Ronaldo is getting new footwear soon.

Shifting gears from Ronaldo's Mercurial cleats worn on the pitch, Nike has readied a new Air Force 1 Ultra F.C. colorway for the Real Madrid standout.

This version features a solid black upper with a rolled-seam construction. A metallic silver overlay is found at the heel, while the white-on-white midsole and outsole includes a small pop of salmon at the rear. The player's signature CR7 branding appears on the insole.

For those keeping score, this isn't the first time Nike has delivered a Ronaldo-inspired take on the classic Air Force 1 sneaker. In June 2016, the brand released a blue version, called Hyper Cobalt, of the Air Force 1 Ultra F.C.

There is currently no confirmed release date for the new pair, however Nike's official product images have been uploaded to its website, which is often an indication that a launch is happening soon.



Adidas Taking Legal Action Against Asics



Adidas is heading back to court to defend its tech properties against athletic brand Asics.

Parent company Adidas AG and Adidas America Inc. has filed a patent-infringement suit against Asics America Inc. and its technology partner, FitnessKeepers Inc., in a Delaware district court.

The case claims that Asics and FitnessKeepers have directly infringed on roughly 10 patents held by Adidas, related to such concepts as "products for providing information about a user during a physical activity," "products that support real-time interactive communication

and automated route generation" and "methods for determining workout plans and sessions."

Asics purchased FitnessKeepers in early 2016 as a way to bolster its digital capabilities, which already included the My Asics coaching app. As part of the deal, the company acquired FitnessKeeper's popular RunKeepers app, now used by more than 45 million people.

According to the filing by Adidas, Asics and FitnessKeepers have encouraged "customers to use the products in an infringing manner." In addition, it states, "The defendants have acted in concert in the fitness

technology marketplace and supported and encouraged the infringing activities of the other."

That statement gives some hint to Adidas' larger mission here: The athletic firm appears determined to defend its place in the tech world.

In 2014, Adidas filed a similar lawsuit against Under Armour Inc. and MapMyFitness Inc., highlighting three patents that it claimed were infringed upon. That case was settled in mediation in May 2016, with Under Armour and MapMyFitness paying a "confidential licensing fee" to Adidas.

In this latest suit against Asics, Adidas has filed multiple claims of direct and indirect infringement, and is seeking a permanent injunction restraining Asics and FitnessKeepers from any activities that violate its patents. It also is requesting compensation in the form of damages that are "not less than a reasonable royalty."

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Florsheim Celebrates Anniversary With Styles Inspired by Early 20th-Century Designs

Iconic men's footwear brand Florsheim is celebrating a milestone this year. The Glendale, Wisc.-based company is turning 125 and marking the occasion with a duo of anniversary styles inspired by original designs from the early 1900s.

The Florsheim design team explored the company's vault to create the new/old looks. Original details are represented, such as the woven label inside each shoe, signifying founder Milton Florsheim's vision to let consumers know they were buying genuine Florsheims.

The updated versions have been made as true to the originals as possible, but with modern last shapes and materials. Each pair



is crafted from leather from one of the U.S.'s oldest tanneries, Horween Leather Co

Included in the offerings is a cap-toe oxford based on an archival style from 1905, done in smooth and embossed leather. The companion wingtip, one of the earliest for the brand, draws its inspiration from a short wing style featured in a Florsheim advertisement from 1908. It's detailed with Horween's Essex vegetable-tanned leather, which starts as a light tan and then naturally darkens, developing a patina over time.



Clare Waight Keller appointed New Givenchy Artistic Director

In an announcement, Clare Waight Keller, formerly of Chloé, has been named the new artistic director of Givenchy. The British designer succeeds Riccardo Tisci, who stepped down in February after a 12-year tenure.

While an official announcement regarding the appointment is expected from parent company LVMH shortly, Waight Keller wasted no time posting an archival headshot of house founder Hubert de Givenchy with the caption, "The journey begins." Givenchy also posted a photo of Keller shot by Steven Meisel.

She will commence duties on May 2 as the illustrious brand's sixth designer to take the reins. Previous artistic directors have included Alexander McQueen, John Galliano and Julien MacDonald, but it was Tisci who is most credited with restoring Givenchy's luster and bringing it into the modern age through his Gianni Versace-style embrace of pop culture; his ability to make mere models supermodels; and his noir, razor-shape romanticism, right down to laced stilettos, extreme cutout mules

and flared-shaft riding boots.

He also appealed to a broad audience through independent sneaker and apparel collaborations with Nike, which immediately sold out. He is rumored to be taking a new role at Versace, though it has yet to be confirmed.

In a dramatically different style, during Waight Keller's Chloé tenure, she kept collections a consistent fusion of gamine and bohemian. Successful scallop flats, studded boots (designed by her predecessor Paulo Melim Andersson) and foldover suede booties were recurring shoe themes.



Teva Teams Up With San Francisco designer Benny Gold

For the latest installment of its ongoing Artist Series, Teva has released a new limited-edition men's sandal that was created in partnership with San Francisco designer Benny Gold.

Their joint creation reimagines Teva's Original Universal sandal, this time with a unique webbing print inspired by Gold's own paper-airplane logo (a symbol intended to represent perpetual youth and the desire to keep moving).

Other elements include an EVA foam midsole, durable outsole and veg-tanned leather footbed that has been stamped with the Benny Gold name.

For Gold, who started out as a graphic designer before launching his streetwear brand, connecting with Teva felt natural. "When I was

in high school, one of my first jobs was at a shoe store where I sold a lot of Teva sandals," Gold said in a release. "I've always had a soft spot in my heart for Teva, so when they approached me about partnering with them to design a limited-edition sandal, it felt like everything came full circle from my childhood."

Gold is just the latest contributor to Teva's Artist Series, which celebrates creative expression. Past partners have included graphic designer Emily Hoy and textile artist Leah Duncan, and designers Steven Harrington and Justin Krietemeyer.

As part of the initiative, Teva has committed to fostering the next generation of artists. For the Benny Gold collab, the partners will donate 10 percent of the retail price from each pair sold to the nonprofit P.S. Arts.

The Rock's Under Armour Sneakers Will Arrive Soon

Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson teased fans with glimpses of his signature Under Armour sneakers on social media. Through his personal social media accounts, Johnson stated that the latest installment of the Project Rock Collection with Under Armour, highlighted by his Rock Delta sneakers, will arrive in stores on April 5. And like only The Rock can, he showed off his sneakers clangin' and bangin' in his favorite place: the Iron Paradise, aka the gym.

To show off the latest looks from the Project Rock Collection, Under Armour and The Rock's production company, Seven Bucks Productions, shot the celebrity in the line over two insane workouts — one in Los Angeles and the other in Hawaii. The workouts can be seen on Instagram in five separate video posts, as well as one four-minute video on YouTube.

Prior to his sneakers getting a release date, Johnson and Under Armour dropped several gym-ready apparel items and accessories, such as T-shirts and duffel bags. The Rock also unveiled his alarm clock mobile app, The Rock Clock, last May.



Film Shows Why the Chuck Taylor Is a Youth Culture Staple

To celebrate Chuck Taylor All Star's roughly 100 years of style influence — and salute today's fans of the sneaker — Converse has released a short film.

"Forever Chuck," directed by Karim Huu Do, is part of the advertising campaign of the same name that Converse kicked off in February. The video is described by the brand as "a visual collage of the dreams and desires that drive people who wear Chucks."

Leading the video are well-known personalities across sports, music, TV and more, such as Vince Staples, Jordan Clarkson, Millie Bobby Brown, Winnie Harlow and Maisie Williams.

The short film, which was released in a 90-second video and a shorter 60-second spot, consists of several vignettes that range from three to nine seconds. The shorter clip will be used for paid advertising slots as well as social media, according to Converse, while the 90-second video will live online.

"The Chuck Taylor has been a cultural icon with a rich history and even more incredible future," Julien Cahn, chief marketing officer at Converse, said in a statement. "Through the debut of our 'Forever Chuck' film, we will have officially introduced our collective of exciting people, who share our brand values and are driving the spirit of youth culture forward."

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Quiksilver rebrands its corporate name to Boardriders



Surfwear brand Quiksilver is rebranding its corporate name to Boardriders Inc., from Quiksilver Inc.

“The renaming of our company signifies the beginning of a new day at Boardriders,” said Pierre Agnes, CEO of Boardriders, in a statement. “Our teams around the world have been building our resurgence brick by brick. Their passion and tireless execution, along with the loyalty of our customers, suppliers and partners, has allowed us to complete the restructuring phase of our turnaround and to begin shifting our focus to growth. As we pivot to growth, we [wanted] to recognize the importance of all three of our iconic brands, and the passion of the boardriding culture that those brands support.”

The surf and skate company, which owns the Quiksilver, Roxy and DC Shoes brands, exited from Chapter 11 protection in early 2016 with a plan to focus on restructuring more than \$600 million in debt.

With some of its financial woes behind it, Quiksilver said it would now enter a new phase of growth: It plans to pursue the hospitality sector.

The company inked a deal with Accor Hotels to use the Quiksilver and Roxy names as part of the hotelier’s new, lower-priced hospitality concept called Jo & Joe.

“We are very proud of the progress in our turnaround program,” said Dave Tanner, managing director of Oaktree Capital Management, which helped lead Quiksilver through its restructuring. “The company has spent the last 18 months focused on rebuilding its foundation from the bottom up, and the results are showing. While we will always maintain the discipline of our new ways of running the business, we are excited to begin to turn our focus toward serving our customers and consumers within the boardriding community in new and innovative ways.”

Reebok’s Ad Campaign Features ‘China’s Hottest Grandpa’

In its push to become China’s best fitness brand, Reebok has tapped Wang Deshun, known as “China’s hottest grandpa,” for a new ad campaign.

The 80-year-old model and actor got his nickname after he walked a runway during Beijing Fashion Week in 2015 and showed off his incredibly chiseled body that belies his age. Deshun is part of Reebok’s ongoing “Be More Human” campaign, designed to inspire people to achieve their full potential through fitness.

According to Reebok, Deshun only got into fitness seriously in his 70s, making his physique all the more impressive.

“Our ‘Be More Human’ message is one that resonates incredibly well today with Chinese consumers eager to live healthier lifestyles

and, as a fitness brand, there is no better country to be investing in right now than China,” said Reebok Greater China general manager Chad Wittman.

Watch the new campaign featuring Deshun, along with Leo Wu and Yuan Shan Shan below.



H&M To Launch Arket

Hennes & Mauritz AB said it will launch a new brand, Arket, after the summer, which is to focus on “a broad yet selected range of essentials for men, women and children, as well as a smaller, curated assortment for the home.”

“The overall direction and focus is quality in simple, timeless and functional designs,” H&M chief executive officer Karl-Johan Persson said in a statement, adding the brand will be positioned in a “slightly higher price segment than H&M with emphasis on materials, function and fit.”

The range is to be supported by a selection of external brands, as well as a café based on a “New Nordic Kitchen” concept where location permits.

The first store will open in London and online in 18 European markets in early fall, followed by stores in Brussels, Copenhagen and Munich.

Also, H&M reported net profit in the first quarter dropped 3 percent, negatively affected by lower sales growth than planned amid tough market conditions in many of the retailer’s main markets as well as higher mark-downs.

Net income in the three months ended Feb. 28 fell to 2.46 billion Swedish krona, or \$274.5 million. H&M’s gross margin, a key indicator

of profitability, increased to 52.1 percent from 52.0 percent during the same prior-year period.

“Retail is going through a challenging period of change in which customers’ shopping behavior and expectations are changing at a fast pace as a result of growing digitalization. This is an accelerating development which also brings great opportunities,” H&M chief executive officer Karl-Johan Persson said.

“To meet the rapid change that is going on in fashion retail we need to be even faster and more flexible in our work processes, for example as regards buying and allocation of our assortment,” he continued. “We are therefore investing significantly in our supply chain, such as in new logistics solutions with greater levels of automation, but also in optimising our lead times. In the changes we are making, advanced analytics will provide important support for decision-making.”

The Swedish retailer posted a 7 percent increase in first-quarter sales to 54.4 billion kronor, or \$6.02 billion, as reported. In local currency, sales including VAT rose 4 percent, while sales excluding VAT amounted to 47 billion kronor, or \$5.25 billion, an increase of 8 percent.



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Leatherworld Middle East 2017 (30 April-2 May, Dubai) Exhibitors line up novel products and innovative design solutions



3D CAD software, Amazonian fish hides, and Saudi faux-leather bags spearhead buffet of diverse offerings at Dubai leather trade fair

Middle East luxury retailers, traders, manufacturers or designers looking for novel products to boost their businesses will be treated to a buffet of unique offerings when the region's leading leather industry trade fair opens next month in Dubai. From 3D design software for footwear and bags, exotic Amazonian fish hides, or Saudi-made faux-leather handbags, Leatherworld Middle East 2017 will showcase the latest market innovations and products when it opens on 30th April at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The 3rd edition of the annual three-day event will feature more than 50 exhibitors from 18 countries, as they vie for the limelight with their newest solutions in a regional market that has a penchant for high-quality, fine leather goods and services. Strategies from France is a debut exhibitor, and will entice regional fashion designers and manufacturers with its 3D computer aided design (CAD) software for footwear and handbags.

Jean Marc Pedeboy, Partner and Head of Business Development at Strategies, said the Romans CAD software is the de facto standard for 3D design, and is used by major brands such as Clarks, LVMH, Wolverine, Decker, Condor In Blue and more. "When it comes to fashion, Dubai is a fabulous place, and our Romans CAD technology can allow local designers, companies, or big retailers to create and build their own brands," said Pedeboy. "This is the perfect hub to build high quality

footwear and sell them in neighbouring countries. We're coming to Leatherworld Middle East 2017 not only with our software platform, but with a group of talented designers who will showcase their productions and inspire others."

Elsewhere, MP Leather from Italy is another debut exhibitor and one of several tanneries at Leatherworld Middle East 2017 presenting a range of exotic leathers such as crocodile, python, water-snake, eel, and stingray. The main drawcard though will be the Middle East launch of its Arapaima hides. The Arapaima is native to South America's Amazon basin, and one of the world's largest fresh water fish – it can grow up to eight feet long and weigh 330 pounds.

MP Leather's Massimiliano Mennonna said the tannery first introduced the exotic hide in Europe five years ago, but it has only recently become a popular choice for the latest collections of luxury fashion brands such as Giorgio Armani, Givenchy, Etro, Rick Owens and Roberto Cavalli. "The Arapaima can be used for handbags, shoes, garments, and even furniture, and we source it sustainably as it's a staple food for the Amazon indigenous and the north of Brazil," said Mennonna. "Arapaima fishing and trade is controlled by environmental protection agencies such as IBAMA and CITES, and only fish from designated ecological reserves can have their leather legally traded. The skins are also Bio-leather because they're chrome and metal free."

"The Middle East leather industry is expanding, not only from a consumer standpoint, but as a manufacturing hub and we think there're strong opportunities

for our business here," added Mennonna. Meanwhile, Wejdan's from Saudi Arabia is among the many exhibitors looking to expand its presence throughout the Gulf region and beyond, and will launch its first full collection of faux-leather women's handbags along with clutches, makeup cases and totes.

CEO Ms. Wejdan Sager said the company has been designing and producing its practical and stylish range in Saudi for the last five years, and now wants to introduce the 'Made in Saudi Arabia' brand to Europe, North America, and Asia. "The fashion industry is greatly growing and developing in the Middle East, especially in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), where we're witnessing more designers and brands establishing in the region," said Sager.

"This along with the growth of the consumer base, who're interested in supporting and celebrating local production is a valuable foundation to our brand's success. We're also catering to the changing needs of our consumer base; women are more financially independent and leading busy lives with demanding jobs and this is translated in our creations, by making our pieces more practical and efficient," added Sager.

Leatherworld Middle East is the region's only dedicated trade show spanning the leather industry's entire value chain, from semi-finished and finished animal hides, chemicals, and machinery to finished leather goods, including footwear, clothing, bags, wallets, and accessories. The ultra-luxurious B2B platform will return with key show highlights, such as the Trend Area, an exclusive showcase of leather innovations seen for the first time; and Fashion Avenue, where the UAE's most talented designers at ESMOD Dubai will present their creative flair with an inspiring array of leather garments, bags, and shoes. "Leatherworld Middle East was designed to showcase innovative and novel products, groundbreaking designs and innovative inventions in leather manufacturing, design and finishing," said Ahmed Pauwels, CEO of organiser Messe Frankfurt Middle East. "The show's vast reach makes it a very efficient vehicle to reach the potentially lucrative regional market."

Leatherworld Middle East 2017 will feature national pavilions from France, South Africa, Indonesia, and for the first time, Egypt. Other features include Leather Production for tanneries and dealers of semi-finished and finished animal hides; and the Shoe Box, a dedicated section for mid to high-end leather footwear.

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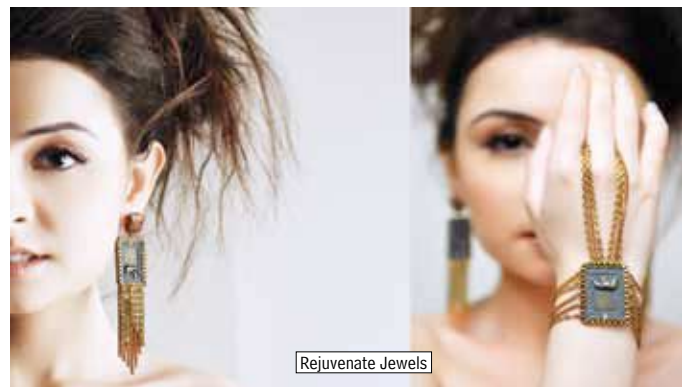
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Bhupinder Singh Kharbanda (BSK), founder of Stylus Concepts (HK) Ltd

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Today, Stylus Concepts (HK) Ltd is one of the largest producers of cricket and hockey footwear in terms of volumes and the number of brands for whom they not only produce but also innovate. This expertise and feeling of pure passion led the team to create a brand dedicated to true sportsmanship and their undying spirit captured as their Jazba. Bhupinder Singh Kharbanda is the founder of Stylus Concepts (HK) Ltd, a Hong Kong-based company with its offices and manufacturing setup in China and branch offices being setup globally this year. BSK is a creative professional who has worked with many known global brands for creating innovative products, brand positioning and image over the years. BSK strongly believes in "Dont do different things but do things differently."

Stylus was formed in 2008, and has grown each year exponentially to have a turnover of USD 20 million currently. Jazba and Uniqers are two of their recent in-house brands. Jazba (pure passion in Hindi) focuses on providing a shoe to a sports-fitness enthusiast, to be an aid to their performance with distinctive styling, quality and affordable price to product quality ratio. While, Uniqers (Unique + Sneakers = Uniqers) on the other hand is for the art of walking, the pause in your life when you don't care about brands or images, but more about individuality and creative expression.

“Online Stores in India have created an image of discount stores; as a result neither the seller nor portal is generating revenue.”

Creating distinctive products & enhancing user experience, BSK Shares his vision with S&A...

Indian retail is fragmented and largely unorganised, how does ecommerce match up with the unorganized retail?

Indian online retail needs to classify itself according to market segmentation whereas currently, they are selling everything on one platform repeating the same mistake as offline retail which is fragmented and unorganized. The online brands need to be selective, ensure quality product/service to earn consumer confidence. At present even the biggest online trade portals look very unorganized and provide a confusing user experience. The scope is immense but needs channelization.

Globally, E-commerce is viewed as a paragon of availability and convenience; Indian consumers tend to look at online shopping as the ultimate discount platform. What's your experience been so far?

Online Stores in India have created an image of discount stores; as a result neither the seller nor portal is generating revenue. It's a vicious circle of enticing consumers to buy more from a discounting platform whereas globally, in E-commerce the efforts are targeted at brand building, user experience, and User Interface quality. However, on Indian Online stores everything looks the same, like a commodity with no product differentiation. The overall online business environment pushes new start-ups towards cheap prices, low quality manufacturing. We are too new to the Indian Online retail and we feel it's a decade behind its Western or Chinese Online Retail Experience.

The attempt at consumer acquisition through deep discounting has not been very successful and has instead resulted in a distinct lack of customer loyalty. Your views?

No Online Retail in the world can survive on discount driven strategy. Consumers only buy those products online which they have experienced offline or electronics, which are available at better deals. India is a conservative market and Online can change its users buying habits by repositioning itself in various categories.



From a seller's point of view, what are the pros and cons on marketplace versus Inventory-led ecommerce?

As a seller, we don't have much control over Online Stores Management System in India in terms of marketing the brand within the store. So you can't do much beyond listing your products and compete with look-a-likes at cheaper prices. The end user is also not aware and has to spend time/effort to make a choice in an overly cluttered store platform. The only benefit is bypassing traditional distribution network and their margins, which can be passed on to the consumer not as a discount but as a better quality to price ratio product, which Jazba is trying to do.

Which e-commerce model works best in India – marketplace or inventory-led?

We feel the Inventory Led Online store works better as they have a focused approach and give a better experience.

How is social e-commerce shaping up?

Social ecommerce is still a very new platform and it will take some time to get matured in India.

Can social commerce completely replace e-commerce?

Social Commerce and ecommerce will exist together as they are interlinked. Most of the time consumers want to check and review products on multiple platforms and trust established online stores better in terms of payments and after sales service.

What roles will giants like Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest play?

Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest can enhance the Informative experience and create awareness and build traffic towards ecommerce retail by engaging customers through a non-shopping platform. Their roles therefore are significant in building a brand/ product image and engaging users.

“India is a conservative market and online can change its users buying habits by repositioning itself in various categories.”

Can this platform survive the impatience of the Millennials?

The millennials are very used to instant gratification the result of which is also getting bored and moving on much faster, but it's difficult to say that they will move away from these platforms as they are entrenched in their daily lifestyle, so unless there is some major innovation in terms of a social app, these are here to stay.

How is Amazon's new brick-and-mortar retail store changing the future of shopping?

Don't see the viability of Brick-and-Mortar retailing in India where the infrastructure is still in the developing stage and real estate is too costly. It can only influence few consumers within a specific range.

Does the future of Indian e-commerce lies on the app route?

I can see a better scope of Online Business moving towards App Based Retail experience. Smartphones are an integral part of our life and all said and done their convenience can't be compared to any other channel so apps are the way to go.

What's next for the e-commerce company?

Positioning and a better inclusive user Experience for consumer is the key and seasonal discounting as against a business model based on a discount platform.

Do feel free to share any other info.

Online Retail needs to play an important role to safeguard the interest of established brands by filtering fakes, look-alikes and discount driven products. Identify potential categories and curate limited options. Improve Logistics and reach, make their storefronts more engaging and user friendly. Give special space to new start-ups, focus on brand stories, and focus on crowd funding. **S&A**

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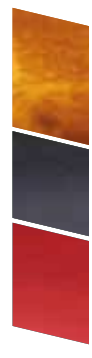


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Akhil Khanna & Priya Shah

European Trend In India

Tisser brings together impeccable quality and comfort. It is one of the very few brands in India to manufacture woven shoes. Its founders, **PRIYA SHAH** and **AKHIL KHANNA**, shared some details about the new brand.





Tisser

Tisser was founded in March, 2017. The idea behind starting Tisser was to introduce the European trend of woven shoes into the Indian market.

Elements

Tisser brings together impeccable quality and comfort. Currently, we are one of the very few brands in India to manufacture woven. All our products are handcrafted by skilful artisans. Our distinctive designs dwell in urbanity along with freshness.

Products

We are offering ballets, sneakers, espadrielles, loafers in our first collection. We target the ages anywhere from 18-50 as our products are not only well designed and stylish but also extremely comfortable.

Quality and designs

Our products undergo various quality checks before getting released. We have a highly efficient team to ensure our designs and quality are strictly maintained.

Retail strategy

We have adopted the online strategy for retail.

Challenges

We are too new to face any challenges as of now. But we foresee brands trying to get into the market doing woven, as we are the first to introduce this style in the Indian market. Also, getting our target audience to understand this very new concept could be a big challenge as well.

In five years

In the next five years, we aim to retail in our own stores. We are looking at expanding into various other woven products like bags, belts, laptop sleeves. We see ourselves being a house of woven and hope that we are able to create a mark in the market. **S&A**



IN THE BEGINNING COMES THE LAST: THE ASTORMUELLER STORY





What do Moldova, Luxembourg, Czech Republic, the Netherlands, and Australia have in common? These are just

a handful of the many countries where you will find shoes crafted by the AstorMueller Group. If it isn't a name you already know, it's certainly one you should remember. In the shoe business, few others have demonstrated such an ability to stay ahead of the trend, and sustain growth even through slump years.

If you've seen shoes under the Bugatti and Daniel Hechter labels, though, you've already come across AstorMueller, albeit indirectly through the products they craft. As the exclusive makers of shoes for these premium brands, AstorMueller has been quietly changing the shoe business, for decades now.

But the company wasn't always the vast enterprise it is today. In fact, its roots can be traced back to a single workshop in the quiet town of Schwelm in Germany, 89 years ago. So how did a tiny workshop in a small Westphalia community, go on to expand its reach to 35 countries across the planet? The secret, they say, lies in the details.





The brief history of a shoemaker

The AstorMueller Group finds its origins in the "Werkstatt Johann Müller fürMaßschuhe" – or in plain English, the Johann Müller Workshop for Bespoke Shoes. This small establishment was established in 1928, by Johann Müller. Clearly, the art of fine shoemaking runs in the family, since Hans Müller, like his father Johann, continued in the same line of work, with his shoe agency adding Portuguese and Italian shoe styles to their portfolio. Today, Tim Müller, Johann's grandson, is the Chairman of the company.



1936

The Müller name comes to represent handcrafted shoes with exceptional fit and craftsmanship.

1984

Continuing the family tradition, Tim Torsten Müller, Johann Müller's grandson, begins his career in the shoe business.

1995

Tim Müller establishes the first factory in Tunisia.

1928

Johann Müller lays the foundation for bugatti shoes, with the "Werkstatt Johann Müller für Maßschuhe" - the Johann Müller Workshop for Bespoke Shoes - in Schwelm, Germany.

1976

Johan Müller's son, Hans Müller, launches Italian and Portuguese collections for the first time.

1990

The first Development Centre in Italy is setup.



2007

bugatti launches the new casual shoes lineup.

2011

bugatti is chosen as the top shoe brand with the best outlook for the future in Germany.

2016

The AstorMueller network grows to 10,000 people collaborating worldwide

2000

The license for bugatti shoes is acquired.

2007

The distinctive bugatti Woman collection is unveiled with select retailers across Europe.

2013

TextilWirtschaft predicts the highest future potential for bugatti Woman collection



Great shoes aren't born. They're crafted.



How did a shoe company sustain growth even through slump years, while other businesses struggled? The answer might lie in AstorMueller's approach to staying ahead of the trend. It starts with their team of analysts on the streets, studying trends across Europe. This is a permanent, year-round pursuit, giving them virtually up-to-the-minute design insights.

However, translating this intelligence to something tangible is one of their key strengths. Bugatti shoes, for example, features about 450 styles for men and 300 styles for women, globally. Maintaining freshness across such a wide array of styles can be quite a challenge. But it's something that Tim Müller instilled into their operations, years ago.

As early as 1998, he drove their shift to present a higher number of collections to the market each year, enabling the Group to react much faster to changing trends. Aside from the competitive advantage, it also helped them

to better address the needs of retailers. This seems to be a competence that has endured: Bugatti shoes was recently ranked by a leading industry journal as one of the fastest brands to introduce new trends in their collection.

Of course, the quality of the final product is where the leather meets the road, to borrow an adage for the shoe industry. Here, the AstorMueller track record speaks for itself. From being the first to bring leading Italian tanneries to India, to being one of the few makers in India to ensure no harmful Azo dyes in their process, and a zero-percent tolerance in size variation, the Group has been setting benchmarks. As they like to say, "Great shoes aren't born. They're crafted."

AstorMueller Today

- ▶ HQ in Hünenberg, Switzerland
- ▶ Offices in Germany, Romania, China and India
- ▶ Exclusive long-term licenses for international brands Bugatti and Daniel Hechter
- ▶ Fast growth rates - far above market average
- ▶ Market leader in Men's shoes
- ▶ Rapidly growing market share in Women's shoes
- ▶ Deep production knowhow with global sourcing and benchmark production capabilities
- ▶ International design team - Spanish, German and Italian designers
- ▶ In-house Last Development Centre in Germany
- ▶ Two AM-dedicated Design Studios in Italy
- ▶ Three state-of-the-art Sample Rooms in India and China which are complete production systems - from prototyping to limited small runs



STYLISH
BY *instinct*







Location: The Lodhi



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STRENGTH
SHOWS ON**
the outside



IT'S
ALL IN
THE
details



Sirish Kumar
India CEO, AstorMueller
Shoes Pvt. Ltd.

An Interview with AstorMueller's India CEO

Interview

What do you believe is the potential for Bugatti shoes in India in the coming years?

Tremendous! The prospects for Bugatti are immense, and we have only just scratched the surface. We believe that the premium space, just below high fashion and luxury, is growing more rapidly and has more potential than any other segment.

Do you plan to expand the brand to a pure casual footwear brand?

In general, we decide the direction for the brand based on where we foresee trends going, while making sure we maintain a strong connection to the brand's heritage. So such decisions are not predetermined. But yes, in recent years, there has been a strong trend towards casual styles, and this is represented in our collections.

How did slowing growth affect your brand? What is your outlook?

Fortunately, we're one of the few companies that has managed to sustain growth, even through slow years. Our pulse on the market is that things are on the up and up, so we see growth picking up even further.

How do you plan to stay ahead of the curve when conditions are unfavourable?

Sometimes, we have to zig when others zag. Whether it was keeping more black derbies while everyone else was dropping them, or launching a new women's range when others had tried and failed, it takes a certain intuition to back a strategy that others think is risky. Our trend scouts and people like Tim Müller, our Chairman, are great at that. It's what has always enabled us to stay ahead.

To what extent have you customised your products keeping in mind the tastes and preferences of the Indian consumer?

The Bugatti consumers are quite global in their

tastes. We find that people are more in tune with international trends than before. So while we maintain the same quality standards and Bugatti design philosophy, we choose products well-suited to the climate and needs of India.

Since it is not a very high-involvement category, how have you worked to keep your brand's buzz alive?

Our take is that people listen if we communicate interestingly. So the key is to capture the ethos and personality of the Bugatti brand, in everything we do, whether it's at a point of sale, or a post on social media.

How long do you expect to absorb growing raw material prices?

With a premium shoe, quality comes first. Of course we maximise efficiency wherever possible to deliver the best value to the consumer, but it cannot happen at the expense of quality. So every season, some styles do reflect changed pricing when necessary.

The present budget was aimed to bring back growth in rural markets. When do you see that coming and does it help your company?

With effective implementation of policy, we may see signs of growth as early as the end of this fiscal year. It helps in the sense that the rural markets still form the backbone of the country's economy, so growth there will translate to benefits across the board.

What are your plans for the future?

Our first priority would be to expand our retail footprint in tier-one cities across the country. We intend to make our presence felt, especially at highstreets, premium malls, and shop-in-shops at major departmental stores. To this end, we will be working with retail partners who understand the potential of the premium segment, and who recognise the strengths of the Bugatti brand. SA

TALK THE WALK

LANGUAGE SHOES

LANGUAGE is the brainchild of shoe manufacturers **P.V. GOPALAKRISHNA** and **AKTHER HUSSAIN**, who are both exporters and began making shoes quite early in their careers. They launched Language in 2010 and making it a popular men's footwear brand. They both have an eye for art as much as the bottom line. **LANGUAGE** is a luxury fashion footwear brand with an exclusive flagship store in Chennai. Its range of men's formal shoes is designed and created by Language for the confident, suave, global citizen.



Language, the label, showcases footwear for men and women, styled and created with precision fitting, sleek and sophisticated style and limitless comfort. LANGUAGE brings top notch, sophisticated in-house designer brands of footwear for men, women and children. TALK THE WALK is the concept branding behind this fabulous line of footwear, based upon the idea that your shoe speaks more about you than you ever could. The flagship store is located at Rutland Gate, Chennai, in the heart of the city's fashion district.

Language gives you an excuse to be chic. The Language men's black leather derby shoes with dark brown cording and perforations on the upper, pointy toes, central lace-ups, padded foot bed, branding embossed on lateral side, an outsole with texturing on the forefoot, and a stack heel is perfect workwear material. Today, the company specializes in creating footwear that reflects the latest fashion trends and applies innovative technology.



“OUR DESIGN STUDIOS IN ITALY CREATES SEASONAL COLLECTIONS FOR MEN AND WOMEN THAT HAVE A DISTINCT STYLE QUOTIENT UNIQUE TO LANGUAGE.”

“LANGUAGE HAS A COMMITMENT TO AFFORDABLE INDULGENCE. A NATURAL WEAR LIFESTYLE BRAND, LANGUAGE IS DEFINED BY CRAFTSMANSHIP PERFECTED OVER 80 YEARS.”

“LANGUAGE AND INC 5 SYNERGIZE WELL IN TERMS OF BRAND PHILOSOPHY AND STYLE QUOTIENT.”



Q&A

Tell us a bit about LANGUAGE.

Defined by a style that's contemporary chic, Language is a range of footwear and leather accessories, targeting the fashion-savvy and sophisticated urban professional. The brand features a design philosophy that blends contemporary styles with high-street motifs, crafted with elegance and sophistication.

Enhanced by new colors and leathers every season, each product is handcrafted using the finest leathers; with an attention to detail that conveys artistry and prestige. The flagship store in Chennai, which launched in 2010, showcases Language, a range of sleek footwear with limitless comfort, Language Exotics, a premium range of luxury men's formals and Collezioni, a range of leather bags and accessories for men and women such as belts, wallets, backpacks, holdalls, totes, mobile phone cases, leather folders and canvas backpacks. Language is also sold at more than 100 MBO stores across the country.

So, what's the philosophy?

Language has a commitment to affordable indulgence. A natural wear lifestyle brand, Language is defined by craftsmanship perfected over 80 years. The brand celebrates urban culture with design, cuts, textures and colors that blends contemporary and chic styles. For Language, quality comes first with design aesthetics that are guided by modern, clean and smart principles and shared with the world through a select range of products.

How does Language differentiate from its competition?

We use top quality leathers sourced from environmental friendly tanneries. Getting the leather right is the primary factor in making our shoes an indulgence. Our design studios in Italy create seasonal collections for men and women that have a distinct style quotient unique to Language. This sets us apart from our competition.

What is the most significant slice of the group (i.e. export or retail)?

Language is a brand that is purely focused on the domestic market with a flagship store in Chennai's fashion district and is also available at several multi-brand stores like Metro and INC5. We will be retailing our shoes from this season through large format stores like Lifestyles, Shoppers Stop, Central and Centro. We are also selling on online platforms like Jabong, Myntra and Amazon.

Which segment and categories of footwear have been consistently performing well?

Driving shoes and moccasins have been our consistent best sellers. Our target audience is the global traveller, a person of fine tastes and relaxed and urban lifestyles. Comprising of entrepreneurs, CEOs and senior management professionals, the TG (target group) has found both driving shoes and moccasins to be a perfect fit.



Following the global trend, driving shoes and moccasins have been welcomed into India too, especially since they are the perfect summer footwear. Our dress shoes with woven textures and prints are equally popular. The casual and dress category allows for more flexibility in designs and use of colours compared to formal shoes that are used as office wear.

What is the rationale behind the business expansion through Inc 5?

Language and Inc 5 synergize well in terms of brand philosophy and style quotient. It is an association where Language will benefit from Inc 5's expertise in retail operations for high-end men and women's shoes.

You have built a very successful, focused business. But what were some of the challenges you faced?

Our initial challenges were in determining the right product mix for the Indian market. After understanding the seasonal requirements in a country as large as India, we were able to target the different regions accordingly. For instance, in the North, boots are more favored in winter

because of the colder climate. In the sunny South, sandals see more sales. By analyzing national and global trends, we have launched our casual range of footwear successfully. We are now focusing our efforts on our formal range. In co-ordination with our partners, like Inc we hope to reach out to a bigger market across the country.

Are you planning an aggressive expansion to leverage the potential of the brands presence in the retail market?

Language has always presented avant-garde styles, which have helped build a loyal customer base. We are in the process of exploring other

retail avenues and adopting an aggressive marketing strategy. Following tie-ups with online retailers like Myntra and Jabong, we are spreading our reach across the country, attracting customers through promotional activities.

So, what is the next big idea from the group?

We have launched Collezioni Language, our brand of leather goods.

What would be your online strategy?

We are currently selling on online platforms like Jabong, Myntra and Amazon. Language products are frequently featured in promotional activities in these platforms. We will also be launching the official Language online store shortly. The website will feature a special collection of footwear exclusively for online shoppers.

Additionally, we are planning to create a presence on social media. Through platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest, we hope to build our online brand identity. SA

“DRIVING SHOES AND MOCCASINS HAVE BEEN OUR CONSISTENT BEST SELLERS. OUR TARGET AUDIENCE IS THE GLOBAL TRAVELLER, A PERSON OF FINE TASTES AND RELAXED AND URBAN LIFESTYLES.”





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SHINE YOUR SHOES LIKE A PRO

Sometimes in a complex world where things can be disarrayed and mixed, the most effective thing a leader can do is stick to simple strategies and clear focus. Launch of its own brand PRO marked a beginning of a new journey for MV Shoe Care.

Ketan Vyas, MD MVSC believes that the most important factor in running a successful enterprise is to maintain a matchless reputation for honesty and never doing something one wouldn't want to see reported in the headlines of the media. He deems that it takes decades to build a reputation and minutes to ruin it. Decidedly, running a shoe care business and producing and selling products is somewhat riskier, especially in a country that not only has a massive population, land mass and demand, but also a fixation with price that may sometimes outweigh the appreciation of quality. Add to this the fact that many competitors may have overseas funding and well established themselves over the past decades, the new entrepreneur needs to be nimble.

Ketan Vyas and Lokesh Chopra, Sales Director PRO share with Shoes & Accessories their journey and vision. "Launch of our own brand PRO marked a beginning of a new journey for us at MVSC. Shoe Care has been our passion and area of expertise for close to a decade now. With all our experience and expertise, we created PRO, a brand that offers a range of professional quality, consumer friendly shoe care products in convenient formats." states Ketan Vyas. "The products are made available to our consumers through our retails partners, shoe chains and distribution network across India. The brand is available with more than 1200 stores across India and growing. PRO is also exported to finest shoe retail stores in Sri Lanka. We are also catering to the requirements of private labels in shoe care and accessories." he added.

So, how has the journey been so far?

Ketan Vyas: Exciting. Introducing the first premium shoe care brand in India, making it the number one premium brand, redefining the category and now launching our own brand has been the best roller coaster someone could ever experience. It has been very eventful and joyful to say the least.

What's the philosophy behind Brand PRO?

KV: Every man has an innate desire to look good. Looking good principally comes from the inner thinking and the outward appearance. It is a known fact that a person feels good when he/ she looks good. PRO aids perfection in appearance by providing products that enables it's consumers to take excellent care of their shoes and have them looking as good as new. We believe that shoes reveal a lot about the personality of the person wearing them. Perfect appearance greatly impacts one's confidence and attitude. With shining and stunning shoes PRO strives to create a winners attitude for all its consumers. To unleash the PRO in you is the PRO philosophy.

How was your initial entry into retail, and what prompted it? How did you end up where you are today?

KV: Indian fashion scenario was changing with more and more brands entering the market and the Indian consumer becoming highly fashion conscious. Lifestyle and choices of an average Indian was undergoing a sea change from unbranded apparel and accessories to branded articles, from mobiles to smart phones, from wrist watches to a multi functional device, from ownership of a single pair of shoes to having a different pair of shoes for every occasion. This upgrade in the consumer's lifestyle and the consumer's desire for more and more products and solutions triggered us to launch PRO.

PRO entered the retail market through tie-ups with major shoe chains offering branded and occasion oriented footwear. Today PRO is perceived as a premium shoe care brand equivalent to any high quality imported brand with several options to choose from, providing the right kind of care for their leather articles.



“With all our experience and expertise, we created PRO, a brand that offers a range of professional quality, consumer friendly shoe care products in convenient formats.”

– Ketan Vyas, MD, MV Shoecare

What is the rationale behind the business expansion?

Lokesh Chopra (LC): We see the Indian Footwear and Accessories market growing. India accounts for large production of leather goods. Modern day consumers are extremely conscious of the impressions they create with things they wear, carry and use. There is an urge to use good things and look neat and hygienic amongst the millennial. They desire to be appropriately dressed for every occasion and shoes are an important aspect of their outfit. It defines their personality and speaks a lot about them. There is a revival in trends and people are exploring newer colors in shoes like Blues, Greens and Reds. Our consumer has moved from owning a single pair of shoes to having a closet full of shoes. Hence we see a lot of scope to invest in latest care products to take care of these personal possessions of our consumers.

Which segment and categories you expect could consistently perform well?

LC: We expect Shoe care as a whole to perform well looking at the current market situations. Shoe creams are one of our best selling articles and we look forward to adding more and more colors to our range of shoe creams.

What reasons would you attribute to its success?

LC: Our shoe creams are made with Eco-friendly formulation. They provide rich and long lasting color to the leather, shining shoes within minutes and a very good user experience.

What strategies have you adopted to expand your presence?

KV: Brand Extension and Product Extension is what we are looking at as strategies to expand our product portfolio and market presence. Addition of insoles and footcare products is the plan in the near future. This addition of newer product lines will also help us increase our unique reach. Exports are another very important channel accounting for our expansion. PRO is already being exported to South East Asian countries and within next 3 years we are expecting to gain a sizable market in South East Asia, Middle East and North Africa.

What does the brand have that is different from the competition?

LC: The brand's passion for excellence differentiates it from the competition and strives to provide the best solutions to our consumers. Our products are made with European material and formulations in state-of-the-art facilities. This is what makes PRO a brand with global standards.

Through the years, Innovative technologies in Shoe Care, Undisputed Focus on Quality and Sheer Excellence in delivery has been paramount to the company's growth and success. With its distinct market position, innovative product range and growing international presence PRO is set to become a global player within the shoe and leather care industry.

Share the association with Metro Shoes

KV: We are excited to join hands with Metro Shoes, India's largest fashion footwear retailer in a JV agreement. This association allows us to partner and grow with best in class shoe retailer of India. Metro's industry leadership, experience and large market footprint makes an ideal partner for this venture. We are confident that our experience in manufacturing and sourcing of shoe care, foot care and comfort products combined with Metro's infrastructure and market presence will enable sustainable, long-term success. Mr. Rafique Malik is the best mentor we could have had for our organization. Under his able guidance and stewardship, we are confident of achieving what we have set out for.

How would you differentiate from the competition?

KV: We focus on In-store training, as the store staff becomes the product advocates for our product category. We work very closely with our retail partners to understand their needs of providing the consumer with a better shoe care experience. In-store communication is an important marketing channel for our category and we focus on giving out important information about the products in the store itself that can aid the consumer's decision-making process.

What's the profile of a typical PRO consumer?

LC: Major share of our consumer base is an urban male that falls within the age group of 25 – 45, SEC AB and is a working professional. He is hard working and confident about achieving success in what he pursues. He wants to be presentable always and has an eye for perfection. Shoes for him are a reflection of style, individualism and his way of life. He is a go-getter and always wants to be ready with that perfect look to seize the moment. We also have a large number of working women consumers in the similar age bracket who shop for fashion products and high end footwear as a part of their grooming essentials.



“Our shoe creams are made with Eco-friendly formulation. They provide rich and long lasting color to the leather, shining shoes within minutes and a very good user experience”

– Lokesh Chopra, Sales Director, PRO

What would be the company's marketing strategy for the next 3 years?

LC: Our major focus will remain Digital and In-store Communications and Activations followed by Print. We also look forward to exploring a chunk of outdoor for the brand in the years to come.

Earlier, You had built a very successful, focused business model. But what are the challenges you faced to create PRO?

KV: Being a new brand we faced resistance to acceptance from the market however post the initial hick-ups we have been able to establish a strong brand presence within the shoe retail chains.

Which is the most significant slice of the group - Private label Or Multi branding product?

KV: Our own brand PRO is the most significant part of our business. Our Private label business acts a support system granting us ease in operations and helps us to scale up production. But our focus shall continue to be expansion of our own brand.

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Too early, however, how soon would you exploiting the potential of your brands presence in the overseas market?

LC: By the time this article goes to print we would have had our first major launch in Sri Lanka with products occupying the shelves of prestigious shoe retailers in Sri Lanka. We also have a small presence in Bangladesh. We have strong inquiries from Middle East and North African regions for which we are formulating products as per the weather conditions and price points.

What markets are you looking to tap on?

LC: Markets which have a strong colonial history will be our focus areas as wearing clean and polished shoes is preferred by the consumer in these regions.

Do you have any advice for those, who might be considering launching new products in retail?

KV: Yes, anybody want into enter the retail industry should do a thorough market research, have their backend very well planned, operate with medium risk levels and shouldn't be afraid to innovate. Last but not the least they should abide by the laws of retailing in the country.

How much has the retail industry in India evolved over the years?

LC: We see a trend in retailers exploring the sweet spot of selling shoes in the range of ₹2,500 to ₹4,000/-. They are looking at the tweens market and accordingly changing their VM and In-store design. Some retailers are creating a distinct identity by moving into a premium positioning and coming up with store decors as well as offering assorted designs of Italian and Spanish shoes. Shoe retail is also evolving in a certain sense by providing more products under the same roof including leather accessories like bags, belts and wallets, shoe care products, socks with health benefits etc. Increasing the ticket size and giving the consumer an excellent shopping experience is high on the agenda.

Does the government extend any support or push to this sector?

KV: With GST coming in and more and more encouragement to the digital payments, organized retailers are getting a significantly more playing field than earlier. I would recommend, that the ministry take a serious look at the import of shoes at ridiculously low values by the unorganized trade. It takes away the good of many initiatives that the government takes and derails the plans of Indian manufacturers and retailers.

Online retailers, with deep pockets, have been selling products at highly discounted prices, and this has made a lot of brands quite uneasy. What's your view on their move?

“We are more inclined towards partnering shoe retailers on their own Ecom websites by tagging their shoes to the shoe care it needs – which results in not only higher sales but also customer satisfaction.”

– Ketan Vyas, MD, MV Shoecare

LC: This is a discomfoting strategy for shoe retailers where consumers do not see much differentiation in the value proposition and settle for the cheapest brand on offer. Many a times, they do not realize that the discount offered is not real but more of a mathematical computation to attract a buy out. Shoe care is not in a similar position as far as the online sales are concerned. More and more brands are offering Shoe care and accessories sales on their own ecom website, without any discounts but proposing it as the right care for the shoe just bought. We as a policy do not allow any online portal to offer any discount on our products, as we have to protect the interests of our retailers.



What KV:

would be your online strategy?
 We are more inclined towards partnering shoe retailers on their own Ecom websites by tagging their shoes to the shoe care it needs – which results in not only higher sales but also customer satisfaction. We also have exclusive tie-ups with shoe retailers who are managing online sales for us.

How would you strategize your digital initiatives to gain brand visibility?
KV: Digital is an important medium for us and we have a blue ocean to explore in the digital space in our category. We would want to leverage this opportunity to connect with our target audience, share relevant content and drive the shoe care regime in the consumer's life by providing PRO as ideal solution. Our focus would be to create an content that is relevant to our consumer and satisfies user intent. Social Media marketing will be a sizable portion of our digital initiatives along with co-presence and collaboration with our retail partners on their digital platforms.

What would be the retail marketing strategy in the coming years? What markets are you looking to tap on?

LC: Our focus is to maximize the presence with the shoe retailers and introduce our product in countries that have a culture of shoe care and formal shoe wear. The MENA and SEA regions are on our dartboard.

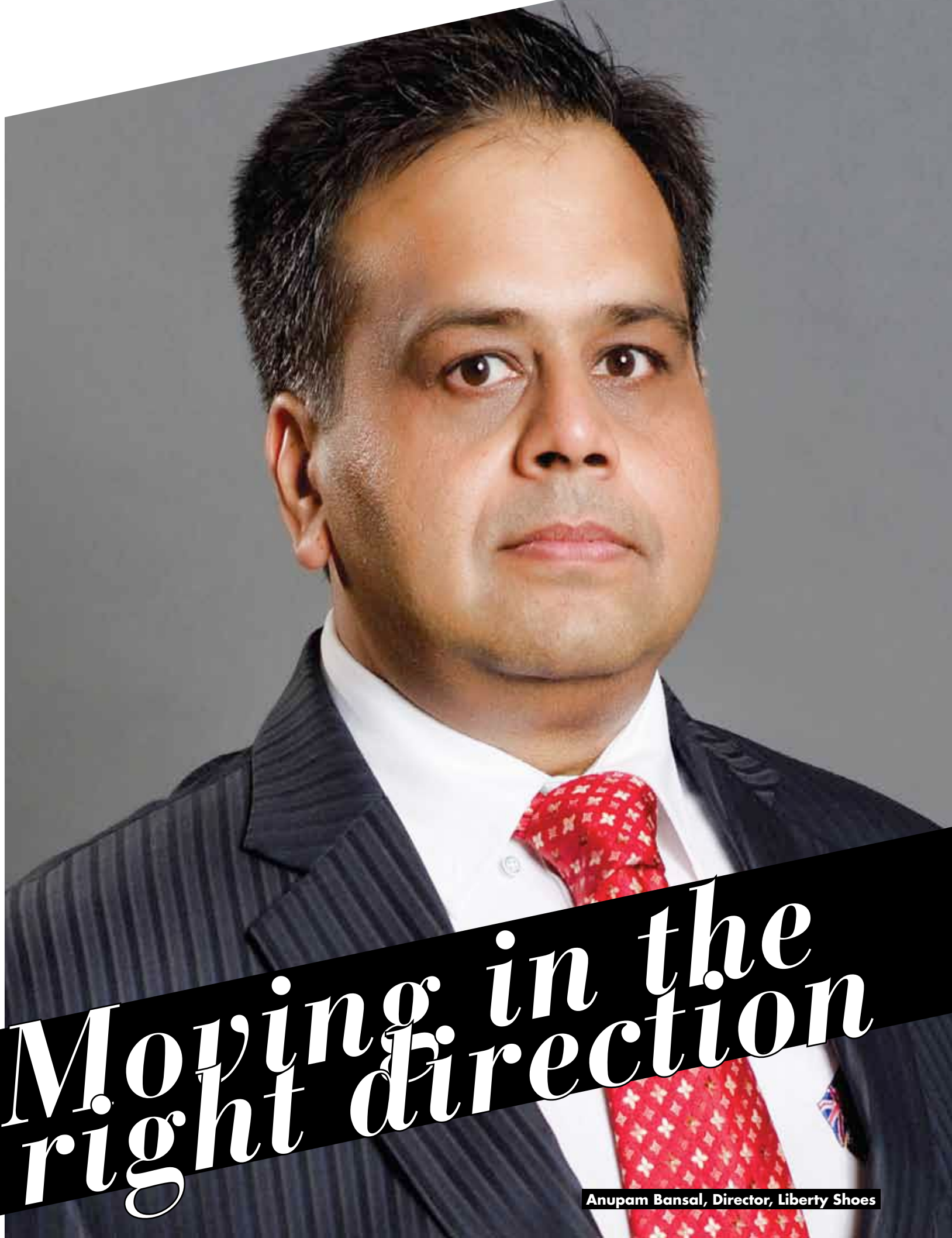
So, what is next billion-dollar idea from KETAN VYAS?

KV: All ideas are good. The ones that work are the ones that are implemented. A good idea, well implemented, backed up with passion and desire to excel will create the next billion dollars for anybody. **SA**

Look at what your competition is doing by using the latest 3D design tools.

What about you?





*Moving in the
right direction*

Anupam Bansal, Director, Liberty Shoes

After occupying various positions of responsibility in the marketing division, **ANUPAM BANSAL**, an Economics graduate from Delhi's Shriram College of Commerce with a background in footwear designing from Ars Sutoria of Italy, is currently heading the organization as the Executive Director- Retail at Liberty Shoes. His association with the brand is in his own words 'a journey of personal discovery and professional evolution'. Anupam shares his views on Liberty's progress post-demonetization with Amit Chopra of Shoes & Accessories.



Anupam foresaw that retailers needed to take a quantum leap forward if footwear shopping was to be turned into a rewarding experience. To him goes the credit for taking the initiative to create a retail team for Liberty footwear. The way ahead was to change the dealer's mindset about the art of selling. So after re-christening them as Channel Partners he worked towards establishing a very interactive relationship through periodic Channel Partners Meet that gave a big boost to the sales and greatly benefited the partners. Anupam also ensured that the relationship with the Partners extended beyond conventional business dealings. He achieved this by making them all feel like members of a close-knit family working together, evolving together and prospering together.

Ushering in change is a challenging task. For Anupam the challenges were all about attuning his sales force to be in sync with the emerging new trends in the market place. And for that he needed to create a strong talent base. So he made sure the company was able to hire the right kind of sales talents for the company- owned stores. He encouraged and challenged the top performers to better the best. Thereby, he succeeded in ushering in a drive for excellence that percolated down to the level of salespersons. Anupam also conducts regular motivational exercises to provide the Partners regular updates on innovative sales strategies that they could adopt to build the most effective rapport with buyers.

How did slowing growth affect your brand? What is your outlook?

In reference to the big step of demonetization, the whole country suffered a cash crunch. But on the other hand, more people got exposed to the use of plastic money. Our credit card sales have shown a phenomenal growth from 40% transactions to up to 90% of our sale. We think the demonetization will help shift the industry to be more organized in the long run.

How do you plan to stay ahead of the curve when conditions are unfavorable?

You are making a presumption about un-favorable conditions. What conditions are you referring to? Effects of demonetization? It is a temporary happening and will smoothen out in due course. Such upheavals will be easily handled by our brand salience and the consumer faith in our brand.

To what extent have you customized your products keeping in mind the tastes and preferences of the Indian consumer?

It is a continuous process to build product portfolios that match the consumer requirements and preferences. This process enables us to build categories for various needs. Being a pan India brand we focus to deliver water proof footwear for the coastal areas and open footwear for the warmer regions besides the usual fashionable offerings that are needed for daily wear and special occasions. We are very consumer centric and focus on constant innovation according to what our consumer's expectations.

How has the Indian shoe market in general developed in the last couple of decades?

The Indian footwear industry holds a crucial place in the Indian economy given its immense social and economic contribution, especially with regards to its potential for employment for weaker sections. India is the second largest

producer of footwear globally. The consumers are more fashion conscious now and consider footwear as a very important part of their attire. With the rising disposable incomes of the customers, India's domestic footwear market is booming. Rising incomes, advent of globalization, improved employment and living standards in the country has led to the expansion in the size of Indian domestic market

Since it is not a very high involvement category, how have you worked to keep the LIBERTY buzz alive?

Footwear is no more a low involvement category. As a brand we are attempting to build involvement with our brand and have seen a strong connect over the years amongst a set of consumers. We are building upon this base and managing to attract newer customers to our fold experimenting with new ideas and activities. Seeing the growth of the footwear industry over the years, we feel innovating not only in our products, but also in the way of presenting the brand to the consumer has become a part of brand identity.

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Are the target audiences mainly executives for men's shoes, and if you look at extending to other demographics what are the broad challenges?

Analyzing the past sales trends, there is no doubt that we stand strong in the men category of footwear. But, liberty works equally hard for all categories that we offer. A lot of hardwork and determination goes into the designing and manufacturing of all products and there is no partiality considering all customers are important to us.

You are lagging behind to your archrival BATA, due to their success in a multiple categories. How do you plan to cover the ground?

We are happy to be called the archrival of the leaders in Footwear Industry. But we see Bata and us as the only brands that cater to the entire family and hence have an equity, which has a large base. Both the brands have enough to catch up and cater to a market, which has an abysmally low per capita consumption of footwear. We seem to be moving in the right direction and this is sought out by the growth in the numbers in all categories and the expansion of the retail network. We are moving towards a destined path and are satisfied with the growth.

The present budget was aimed to bring back growth in rural markets. When do you see that coming?

India has a lot of potential in tier 2 and tier 3 cities and towns and therefore, Liberty is constantly entering these towns and tapping the potential market. The urban market dominates approximately 2/3 rd of the consumer market and rest is located in the rural areas. It is something that needs to be worked upon. It is not a one-day task but a long process for which the results will be visible over the years.

What would be your online strategy?

As retail vertical, e-commerce is still at a nascent stage but the opportunities it provides are huge. We have initiated a dedicated platform for customers to browse through the extremely wide range of products that Liberty offers which at times gets difficult to present to a customer at a single outlet. We have seen an encouraging response and we are building tools to make the user experience better with each passing day. We are constantly engaged in improving our e-commerce platform for our customers' convenience as it holds a very important place in current times.

What collection should we expect this summer from Liberty shoes?

Our new collection is very inspirational and aspiring. We are launching a variety of trendy and comfortable range suitable for one and all, as we are a family oriented brand. Our products have a fashionable appeal keeping in mind the needs and comfort of the consumer to give a 360-degree user experience. SA



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STAYING AHEAD OF THE CURVE

ALBERTO TORRESI

If being a businessperson is hard, being a young entrepreneur is even harder. As a founder, you don't have just one job. You have almost a dozen: manager, marketer, worker, leader, product developer, visual merchandiser, strategist, accountant, storyteller, salesperson, innovator, change maker, brand owner, risk taker. Surely, the list goes on. You essentially should be adjustable and flexible, communicate modestly but confidently, adapt & learn quickly, device sound commercial practices, and execute-execute-execute sensibly with determination and focus.

ISHAAN SACHDEVA can now boast about his maiden venture. However, it was not easy to launch out 7 years ago when he entered into an established export family business. With significantly less experience than seasoned elder counterparts, he had prepared to do all of the above, working on ambitious problems and facing tremendous odds. But with a few wearing's of the stylish shoes later, ISHAAN was convinced there was a gap in the market, decided to launch his own retail shoe business ALBERTO TORRESI.



“ WE ARE QUITE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE GROWTH OF RURAL MARKETS. THE GOVERNMENT IS TAKING A LOT OF MEASURES TO ENSURE THIS. ”



Ishaan Sachdeva, Director, Alberto Torresi

Did demonetization affect your brand?

The implementation of demonetization came as a surprise to the retailers. November-December is the time of closing for about 30% of the businesses, therefore the implementation of demonetization at that point of time brought bit uncertainty for many. It was a huge dent not only in terms of immediate purchase but also in terms of future projections. Due to demonetization, the sales were largely affected as they got frozen up. There were issues in consumption front and production front both because the entire value chain got disturbed. However with time, things are getting back to normal and the sales are also increasing with time.

How do you plan to stay ahead of the curve when conditions are unfavorable?

Broadly, there are two ways of staying ahead of the curve. The first one is to be very fashionable and adapt to the latest trends quickly so that the competition lags behind. The other one is to be fast in terms of system so that the competition hardly gets any time to react to the changes. In other words, a right combination of both development and execution is what helps you to stay ahead of the curve.



“ BROADLY, THERE ARE TWO WAYS OF STAYING AHEAD OF THE CURVE. THE FIRST ONE IS TO BE VERY FASHIONABLE AND ADAPT TO THE LATEST TRENDS QUICKLY SO THAT THE COMPETITION LAGS BEHIND... ”

How has the Indian shoe market developed in the last couple of decades?

Indian shoe market in the long run has a huge scope. Today customers are fashion conscious and are aware of latest fashion trends further giving huge impetus to the retailers. Though in women category, the market is still highly unorganized but in men's category, the Indian shoe market has seen a lot of development. India as a market is evolving and people are more open to new things. Customers now like to experiment a lot. A few decades back, only a few types of style were worn by everyone irrespective of age and class. But now we see a lot of new variety entering into the market. We are reaching a state where the developed markets are, not only in terms of trends but also in terms of how the business is being done.

How do you keep your brands buzz alive?

The main essence of the brand is to offer a lot of variety in terms of styles, designs and colors. Providing a variety of categories in footwear range like boots, formals, loafers and slip ons to our customers has been our priority. Offering styles, which are not easily available on other platforms, like the fishermen shoes, has always been our philosophy and the reason behind our growth.

Coming from a strong export business, how customized are your products for the Indian consumer?

We have always had a strategy of adapting to the latest trends and delivering the product according to the consumer's tastes. This is what has been the core of the brand since many years. Also innovation has always ruled our collections. We have also done a sweet hybrid of Italian and Indian footwear. Inspired by the Italian designs we have an entire range of classical footwear which have been modified according to the Indian preferences.

However, now we are shifting back to our core roots of bringing more and more new trends. In summers we are planning to introduce many new trends and as far as winters are concerned, we are overhauling the entire look and feel of the brand. So by the time winters come, we will be able to launch a lot of different styles which will be similar to something what we did when we launched the brand.





We have also introduced a strong technical backup into our products. In the past 6 years, we have introduced about 4-5 technologies like stress-less technology, impact system and memory technology to name a few. Introduction of new styles and technology are the major contributing factors that have helped us to keep the buzz alive.

Are the target audiences mainly executives for men's shoes, and if you look at extending to other demographics what are the broad challenges?

Now-a-days people are open to experimentation. Customers these days look for latest trending styles with compromising the quality. From a territory of shoes being a need, they are moving towards a direction where shoes have become a necessary style statement. In this sector, men's shoe is a big category. The amount of boom that this category is experiencing in terms of per capita consumption is enough in itself. In terms of demographics we plan to come up with new casual collections for the young crowd. We are also coming up with our premium range which we had introduced sometime back as a trial. Our motive behind this was to do a research and then come up with the better version of it. This also helps us to find out what the next category will be.

How do you plan to beat the competition?

We at Alberto Torresi aim to deliver the best quality products to our customers at the best possible price. We take quality as a qualifier. What we take as a value added factor is the amount of variety we offer. For this we are having agreements across the globe. We are searching for concepts outside India and trying to bring them to India and offer it to our customers.

How long do you expect to absorb growing raw material prices?

Raw materials play a key role in every trade. Challenges in terms of leather will continue. But as far as other components are considered, more people are entering this trade and the government is also promoting this sector. This is helping us to get world class components which this industry lacks currently. This will eventually help India to reach a really good position in comparison to its global competitors.

What is your investment plan - Operations as well as marketing?

Our strategy is to go achieve more point of sales in the country. We are adding new counters across the country. We wish to take the brand across the globe and take the necessary actions accordingly. We are adding new geographies and attacking new markets worldwide. On our website we have even started our exclusive collection section in which we offer products that are not available anywhere else. As a brand we want to connect to our customers more and more. Another strategy is to have more push on the offline as well as the online front. With the advent of so many ranges, we will be going into tier 2 cities as well.

Your views on the Budget

We are quite optimistic about the growth of rural markets. The government is taking a lot of measures to ensure this. Development of infrastructure is an important factor that is leading towards the same. Good

infrastructure speeds up the entire exercise. We are hopeful about it and the future looks bright for the rural markets.

What would be your 2017-18 targets, in respect to markets, numbers and products?

As mentioned earlier, our goal is to achieve maximum point of sales in the country and also worldwide. We will be coming up with a lot of new range in the coming seasons. Since now the customer is open to the idea of experimentation, we plan to introduce new concepts from across the world and modify them according to the Indian customer's preferences. Taking the brand abroad is also on the cards.

What would be your online strategy?

E-commerce has added a lot of value to the entire Indian economy. That era has now passed when the offline business was affected by the online or vice versa. Rather now it is the time for collaboration between the offline and online. Now with the segregation of range according to the online and offline, the competition between the two has turned into complementation. Also e-commerce gives us an opportunity to connect with our customers directly. Recently, we have re-launched our website and through that we keep getting feedbacks about their choices and experiences which further help us to evolve. SA

“ WE HAVE ALWAYS HAD A STRATEGY OF ADAPTING TO THE LATEST TRENDS AND DELIVERING THE PRODUCT ACCORDING TO THE CONSUMER'S TASTES. ”

Marketing to the Affluent

The launch of AFFLUENCE's contemporary and classic collection is the culmination of **AQEEL AHMED**, director of FLORENCE SHOES first year in the role since moving across from export market to the domestic domain.

Despite his two-and-a-half decades in export business, catering only to top premium footwear brands, Chennai-born and bred Aqeel Ahmed admits that the past 12 months of launching his own premium menwear retail brand at the MBO's has been one of the steepest learning curves of his career.

His first year in the retail business has culminated in the launch of Affluence brand, with just 24 skus that is intended to be the lynchpin of INC 5 & Regal stores. It unites both the store's contemporary ranges and classic looks – which previously sat with varied brands.

"My first year directing the retail brand has been an amazing experience, particularly working with INC5 and Regal stores," says Aqeel. "We wanted to create an international quality collection area that people would want to own, at a platform that does those collections justice."



Q&A

Who in fashion do you most admire, and why?

I am really privileged to have worked with so many inspiring people. Shoes that really inspire in quality and durability are Fergammo. Style I like the best is from Gucci.

Which is your favourite store?

Best place to shop are in New York, Milan and Paris. The stores have an amazing energy and the most fashionable merchandise.

What is the best-selling brand you have ever worked with?

I think I would say all the European premium brands. The products are really cool, the mainline does phenomenally well across all the stores, and the diffusion lines are equally fabulous.

What has been your proudest moment?

Our business has transcended from conservative collections to fashionable orientations. I believe that moment comes only when with your passion not with numbers of pairs you produce.

What would be your next billion dollar idea?

Very soon we will launch an well known international brand in retail.



The resulting concept was designed in conjunction with Italy-based designers. "Our brief was to create something distinctly different to the rest of the brands, and that would represent more of a luxury feel or distinctive collection than a traditional product," explains Aqeel.

The present collection displays premium quality leathers and leather soles are prominent in the assortment and offerings, as are comfort paddings and patterns and glossy heels. "I wanted it to look like a luxury collection, where patrons might have just rocked up," he explains.

While a number of the retailers for contemporary brands on high streets were very positive about the new brand – 30% of Inc5 & regal's collection is formed of brands that are high end – the edgy aesthetic did worry us initially "Alluence had to be careful not to make the collection too contemporary. Some of the brands have middle-of-the-road customers too, and it is important not to make those shoppers feel uncomfortable shopping there with too high prices."

He insists that the brand has been created for and is suitable to span the ages "of 25 through to 80. We had targeted a very wide customer base and our collection reflects that," he says. He analyses the

collection in two sections. The core and fashion, such as AFFLUENCE core is a balanced collection with more trendy styles. Although the volume of stock for core and fashion brands is fairly even. He says trendy collection makes up about 70% of Affluence sales, as fashion-forward customers religiously buy into new looks each season. There are also a number of new additions to the casual collection, including drivers shoes.


The display at INC 5 of the collection is based around a 10 x 10 ft wall, with clear style signposting for each row of product – classic and trendy. "Now we have the room to do casual and classic with authority. It is important that we offer something for everyone, and clearly show that," he says. He will not comment on which classic style are the bestsellers but says that Tan and Black shades both do particularly well.

In terms of keeping the shelves fresh with collections, Aqeel Ahmed was excited about seeing what was on offer at various Fashion Weeks. "I was thrilled that many European brands showed great collections in Milan and Paris and I would like bring one such brand to India soon," he says. "The collection is always so beautiful, and I love the leather feel, but it is the seasoned brands who are exciting to watch coming through." SA








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GOPAL GUPTA, MANAGING DIRECTOR, GUPTA OVERSEAS

INNOVATION, HARD WORK AND ENTERPRISE AT AFMEC

Agra Footwear Manufacturers & Exporters Chambers (AFMEC) was established to expand the booming footwear industry, which is now supported by important associations, major manufacturers and by the government to integrate resources for the sector. Today, AFMEC is one of the most effective platforms to develop, grow and expand the footwear sector. Footwear manufacturers face great challenges on the investment or expansion which AFMEC tries to address and resolve. It helps its members in every possible form to strengthen services for its members and enhance effectiveness. **GOPAL GUPTA**, Managing Director, Gupta Overseas, a very active AFMEC executive member, shares his views with Amit Chopra, MD Shoes & Accessories...

What's your overview of Indian footwear Industry?

The leather industry captures a place of distinction in the Indian economy owing to its enormous potential for employment, growth and Exports. There has been an increasing emphasis on its planned development, aimed at optimum utilization of available raw materials for maximizing the returns, particularly from exports. The exports of leather as well as leather products have gained a tremendous momentum during the past two decades. Indian leather products have attained a well-merited recognition in international markets besides occupying a prominent place among the top seven foreign exchange earners of the country. The leather industry has undergone a dramatic transformation from a mere exporter of raw materials in the sixties to that of value added finished products.

What are AFMEC's prime objectives?

AFMEC members have remarkable qualities of innovation, hard work and enterprise, which in turn has made Agra a prime hub for footwear exports and placed it at the heart of the footwear world. The hard working spirit and creative heart and soul of Agra have inspired a successful reinvention over the past 20 years. World-class manufacturing facilities and expanding capacities brought enormous foreign exchange for the nation and new jobs to Agra. This economic growth has been led by one of the highest rates of private sector growth over the past decade and the creation of over 50,000 jobs across the city. However, in spite of this renewed success and pride, Agra is still tackling social problems left by 40-50 years of economic decline. The global retail crunch and lower consumption are affecting our ability to continue to grow the economy and the trade. Despite these challenges the same qualities of innovation, hard work and enterprise will see us persevere and succeed.

What are the major challenges for the coming year for the Chamber?

AFMEC is professional organization that brings together 80 manufacturer / exporters and 25 members from the allied industry. It represents the one third of the entire Indian leather industry in terms of exports value, ranging from exports to domestic brands distribution of finished products. For the greater good of the industry, AFMEC Activities are focused on three missions: coordinating the member Federations, promoting the excellence of the Indian footwear industry,

and representing all industry sectors in dealings with the Indian authorities. The major challenges facing the Indian leather industry are to support businesses within the industry and assist new entrepreneurs, train leather industry professionals and teach them unique skills and methods, produce in a sustainable and responsible products, increase Made in India production, and maintain the industry's excellence.

The industry's thousands businesses, artisans, SMEs, and large Companies with prestigious names employ 2.5 million people and generate a turnover of 6 billion dollars. Sustainability and growth of the sector is a major challenge.

Key factors that determine the success of AFMEC

The industry is made up of artisans, micro-businesses and SMEs that work as sub-contractors for larger companies because of their precious know-how. Gradually, these workshops and small businesses are disappearing with no one to take over their operation. As a result, the sector could suffer gravely. By being part of the industry's value chain, these artisans, micro-businesses and SMEs help to promote the Indian sector abroad. AFMEC represents the sector at the governmental level and also helps in international representation of the sector. In turn the chamber also encourages SME's and micro business succession.

What is your present priority as an AFMEC executive member?

The industry is made up of thousands of businesses. The most innovative of these are growing thanks to break throughs made in R&D, Improvement in the quality of skills, production, new industrial processes, etc. AFMEC members aim is to encourage the emergence of new entrepreneurs, promote creativity and craftsmanship. AFMEC represents the sector at all levels, helps in training programs, coaching and financial assistance.

Our emphasis remain upon:

- ▶ Share and Adapt industrial expertise to ensure better quality products and increase industrial performance, ensure sustainable development,
- ▶ Maintain, develop and transfer knowledge and develop initial and vocational training programs.
- ▶ Support the promotion of the leather industry by providing directional and technical assistance to businesses to enable them to take part in national and international trade fairs.
- ▶ Representing the sector at all levels and platforms

AFMEC's Objective remain:

- ▶ Continue to develop the trade and grow highly skilled and motivated people
- ▶ Developing successful enterprises whose prosperity is environmentally sustainable

AFMEC's Role remains:

- ▶ Bring together the players and represent them with the public authorities as well as with professional bodies.
- ▶ Examine and defend the collective, material and moral interests of its members,
- ▶ Examine problems relating to taxation, business, customs and technical issue that affect one or many of its members within the framework of the general inter-professional interest.
- ▶ Put forward and agree on solutions to resolve these problems and coordinate the efforts of the various member organizations to achieve the agreed solutions.
- ▶ Resolve professional disputes, through arbitration or discussion.
- ▶ Represent all footwear professions.
- ▶ Promote and market the raw material and consumer goods made from leather.

AFMEC members have remarkable qualities of innovation, hard work and enterprise, which in turn has made Agra a prime hub for footwear exports and placed it at the heart of the footwear world.

Promoting the leather sector is one of the priority actions of AFMEC.



What capacities and efforts is the chamber investing in manufacturing and retail sector?

The executive members have been relentlessly working towards the improvement and elevation of the sector. Apart from stressing upon exports and manufacturing we have been functioning and stressing upon various authorities to reduce the taxes and cost imposed on manufacturers of leather products and retailer brands. The difficult economic climate has weakened the retail sector, which has registered a decreased turnover, while overheads in that same time have continued to increase. Particularly, in retail we have observed that shop rents have increased by an average of nearly 17-18% over the last five years to reach almost 15% of turnover, which is the equivalent of the wage bill. This in turn makes the business locally unviable. AFMEC has been consistently stressing upon the authorities to take into account the specific characteristics of the leather industry when drawing up new legislative measures for businesses, and to reduce taxes and social contributions in order to allow the businesses to become more competitive.

In the past we haven't seen any stress on the domestic leather / footwear market by any councils. Would AFMEC invest any efforts or plan any specific initiatives for the domestic sector and export sector?

Promoting the leather sector is one of the priority actions of AFMEC. Indian leather companies are held in high regard by domestic as well as foreign customers, economic decision-makers have little awareness of the industry. To increase the leather industry's visibility, AFMEC, organizes an event every year where the allied sector in its many forms has generated significant economic resources as well as opportunities for employment and training. Leading companies across the raw material sector are its participants, Local elected officials and representatives of various institutions, the government and the region's schools providing training, along with young people undergoing training are all invited, as are the regional and local media. To attract young people to the sector, we must maintain an active and constant presence and a celebratory platform.

AFMEC & MAKE IN INDIA

Today, thanks to the expertise of the factories in the region, Indian footwear is highly sought-after by big companies internationally. AFMEC ensures that jobs are saved, training programs are created and skills and expertise are preserved. AFMEC would like to see these factories continue to collaborate with all their clients. It would also like for the improvements in production and raw material quality to benefit all manufacturers, large and small.

What is the biggest strength of the Indian manufacturers and exporters?

In the recent years, Indian companies have become better structured; now many companies in the footwear industry have been seeking to recruit young people who have acquired training in the footwear professions. The footwear sector as well as the leather goods sector continues to create jobs, and is now looking for young employees. In response to this situation, existing training courses have also well adapted and are located closer to many important regions where the jobs are situated. This would help the industry to improve the training system and make it more coherent both from a geographic perspective as well as in terms of training programs. AFMEC has always supported and promoted the training institutes in various training courses, as this would make the sector more attractive and would give young people practical knowledge about all the profession.

Future plans for Indian leather industry in world map

Indian companies must prepare to become more competitive in domestic trade as well internationally. Each year, AFMEC felicitates its top performing members, which sets a benchmark and is a huge inspiration among the other manufacturers. This in turn propels the players to innovate, increase expertise, and expand which results in higher employment and supports young professionals and workforce. Agra's footwear sector has grown rapidly in recent years thanks to the dynamism of its industrial companies. It would be AFMEC's prerogative to ensure the growth of its members and support young entrepreneurs. S&A



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CFLA National Council Meet

Discuss GST and Policy for footwear and leather accessories



(LtoR) Mallika Verma, Adesh Gupta, Inderdev Singh & R.K. Gupta

Stalwarts from the footwear, leather, accessories and components industry met at the 6th National Council meeting of CFLA on 24th February 2017 at Hotel Taj Palace, New Delhi.

The CFLA NCM is a platform where members come to a common footing to discuss industry challenges and concerns and find solutions to them. The members discussed issues ranging from CFLA advocacy on GST which is to be rolled out in 2017; setting up of the much desired Central Footwear Research Institute in Haryana for which CFLA has procured approval for land allocation from the state government ; and expansion in CFLAs membership.

The executive council agreed that there is need to expand the Councils outreach and the members unanimously decided to organize meetings and events in clusters and cities outside Delhi to reach out to small and medium players and get them interested in associating with CFLA.

Talking about the GST, Adesh Gupta, shared with the members that all signals from the government indicate that GST will roll out on 1 July 2017. The footwear industry has been suffering from and restricted to achieve its potential, as a result of high rates and multiplicity of taxes. He hoped that the industry's voice is heard and footwear kept in the merit rate list. Chairman, CFLA has met several senior level officials in the GST council and also the Finance Ministers of several states and pitched for a 5% rate on footwear, leather, accessories and component industry under GST along with :

- ▶ Identification of footwear as priority sector in view of its employment generating capacity
 - ▶ Including Footwear, leather, accessories and component industry in the merit rate list of goods at 5 %
 - ▶ Assigning 'At par status' with textile and apparel sector for footwear industry
 - ▶ Uniform rate of taxation across India without any exemptions or discrimination
- Highlights of the Economic survey and the Union Budget were discussed at length and the members applauded the focus assigned to the industry in the FM's budget speech, especially the announcement regarding the special scheme for the labour intensive leather and footwear sector on the pattern of similar Rs 6,000-crore special package announced for the Textile Sector in June 2016. The Footwear and leather sector would get a fillip from the scheme and lead to the sector's further growth and creation of jobs. In this context, CFLA shall be presenting a wish list to the government.

In order to enhance management of CFLA services, improve communication, eventually to expand the council and add new programs the chairman had appointed MallikaVerma, who has taken up her official duties as full time Executive Director in the office since feb'17. She was excited about the opportunity to bring her energy, enthusiasm, and operational abilities to the service of the



larger nonprofit trade community. Prior to her successful career at Food Processing Sector Skill Council as its CEO, Mallikas spent time with several other organizations, including FICCI and PHDCCI. She has varied skills set and deep knowledge in trade facilitation, investment promotion and event organization.

It is CFLA's strategy to advocate and represent the concerns of this sector to the policy and decision makers. Chairman, CFLA has endeavored to meet senior officers at the center as well as in the state governments. The efforts have started to bear fruits. CFLA has been receiving adequate recognition from policy makers and the sector is being given due recognition by the government. Besides, Government of Haryana, the Government of Jharkhand has also identified the sector as a priority sector and announced a policy for Textile, Apparel and Footwear. Government



CFLA executive members with Dr. D.K. Tiwari (Center)



(L to R) Adesh Gupta, Dr. D.K. Tiwari, P.K Das & Vipin Seth



of Karnataka has invited CFLA to make a presentation on the draft policy for leather and footwear for Karnataka.

In this context, and in keeping with the tradition of the council, Dr D K Tiwari, I.A.S. Principal Resident Commissioner, Government of Jharkhand, was invited as Special Guest to interact with the members on the recently launched Jharkhand Textile, Apparel and Footwear policy.

Dr D K Tiwari recapitulated the highlights of the recently announced policy while also dwelling on the strengths of the resourceful geography of the state and its dynamic & visionary leadership. The state is proud to possess the best of educational institutes and connectivity besides being ranked the best in labour reforms and inspection related compliances; ease and cost of doing business; industrial harmony; etc.,

InderdevMusafir, Vice Chairman, on behalf of CFLA thanked Dr Tiwari for an insight into the state of Jharkhand and also conveyed the industry's concerns as Jharkhand has one of the highest VAT rates on footwear in the country. He requested Dr Tiwari to carry industry's request for a reduction in rate of VAT on footwear to the state Government. SA

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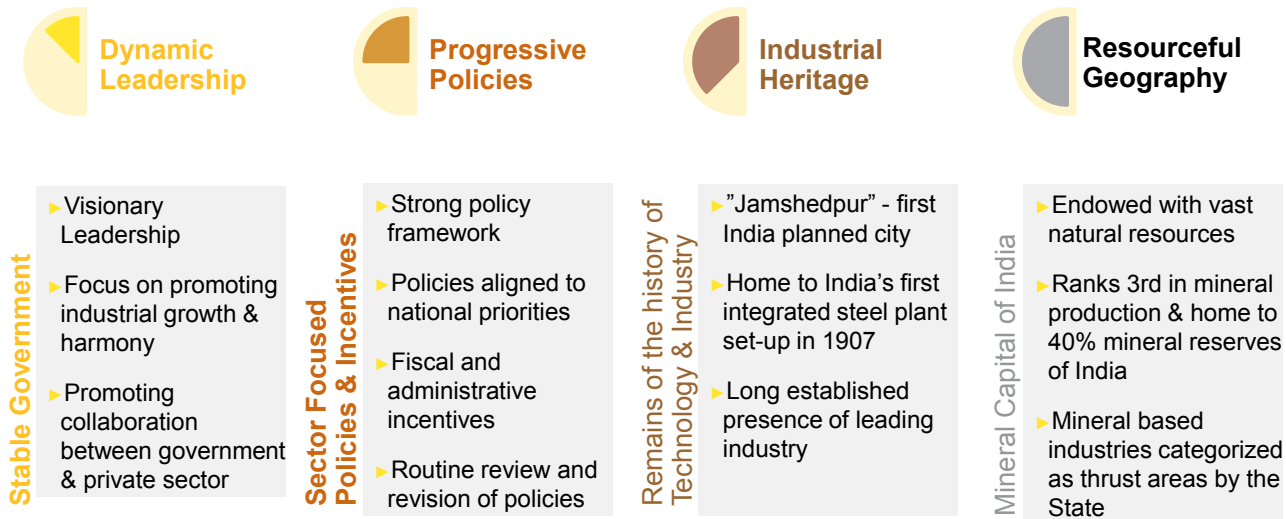
Also, an Android version that works on all compatible devices

Momentum Jharkhand



The new state of Jharkhand, widely acclaimed as the region of future, has enormous potentialities for industrialization. With its large deposits of minerals, it provides a solid launching pad for all kinds of industries. With 40% of nations mineral reserves, the state government is committed to rapid development by leveraging the Location Advantage, combined with visionary Political Leadership and a proactive Industrial Policy.

Why Jharkhand?



- ▶ Ranked 1st in Labour reforms and inspection related compliances in India
- ▶ Endowed with 40% of India's mineral wealth
- ▶ Man days lost due to industrial strife lowest in India & Long history of industrial harmony
- ▶ Ranked 7th in Ease of Doing Business in India

Jharkhand is emerging as a prime candidate in the investment space. Jharkhand is among the most competitive and investment-ready states with a clear vision and roadmap. It ranks among the best in terms of business reforms and has implemented advanced practices for facilitation of investments. It is proactively engaging in the central government's flagship Make in India, Start Up India and Stand Up India initiatives. This is a state where industrial conflicts are few. That Jharkhand figures high on the Directorate of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) list on ease of doing business parameters is a pointer to the progress the state has made.

Jharkhand is mulling aggressive initiatives to promote and market its ethnic textile and handloom products in a bid to help its large indigenous community of crafts persons grab a major pie of the rapidly growing national and global textile market. An event called 'Opportunities in the Textiles, Apparel, Footwear & Fashion' was recently held in the state.

The state government's efforts, led by Jharkhand Silk Textile and Handicraft Development Corporation Ltd (Jharcraft), were discussed along with emerging opportunities in the textile, apparel, footwear and fashion sector at the event. The seminar brought together various stakeholders and reputed dignitaries in the fashion, textiles, footwear and apparel sector, during the India Fashion Week 2017, to discuss insightful propositions on finding newer markets for products handcrafted by the state's tribal. Adesh Gupta, Chairman CFLA was a special invite to the show.

At the meeting held on 24th Feb'17, Adesh Gupta, Chairman CFLA had invited Dr. Devendra Kumar Tiwari, I.A.S. Principal Resident Commissioner, Government of Jharkhand. Adesh Gupta stated, "Earlier in Feb'17, I was invited by the Jharkhand government to visit the state and gauge the potential for investing in a footwear park. After the visit, I believe the state has the potential to encourage prospective investors about the high standards of governance and competitive labor cost available."

Dr. DK Tiwari shared his vision for the state through a wonderful and exhaustive presentation. He shared his thoughts along with the CFLA members on the opportunity of investing in footwear manufacturing in Jharkhand.

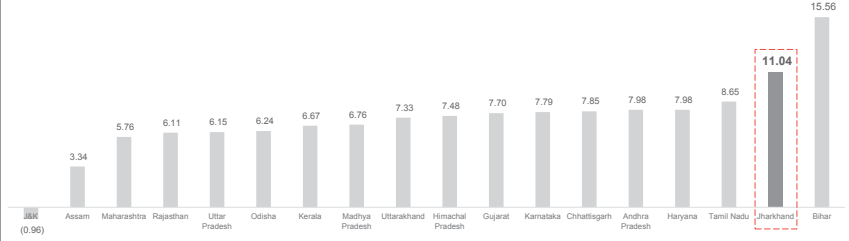
Jharkhand, one of India's newest states, was carved out of the southern portion of Bihar in 2000. It is a land locked territory bound by the state of Bihar on the north, West Bengal on the east, Orissa on the south, and Chhattisgarh on the west. Jharkhand's proximity to the Ports of Kolkata (400 km from Ranchi), Haldia (420 Km from Ranchi) and Paradeep (560 Km from Ranchi), makes the State attractive for it to be an ideal location for Export Oriented Units (EOUs), interested to enter in emerging markets of South East Asia considering the freight advantage with safe, smooth and faster movement of their produce. In addition to this, Jharkhand is also having dry port facility at Jamshedpur.

There has been large-scale change in industrial environment due to economic liberalization, privatization and globalization. Strong emphasis is being placed on Micro,

Jharkhand | Economic Profile

GSDP (2014-15): USD 33 bn.

GSDP Growth in % (2014-15)

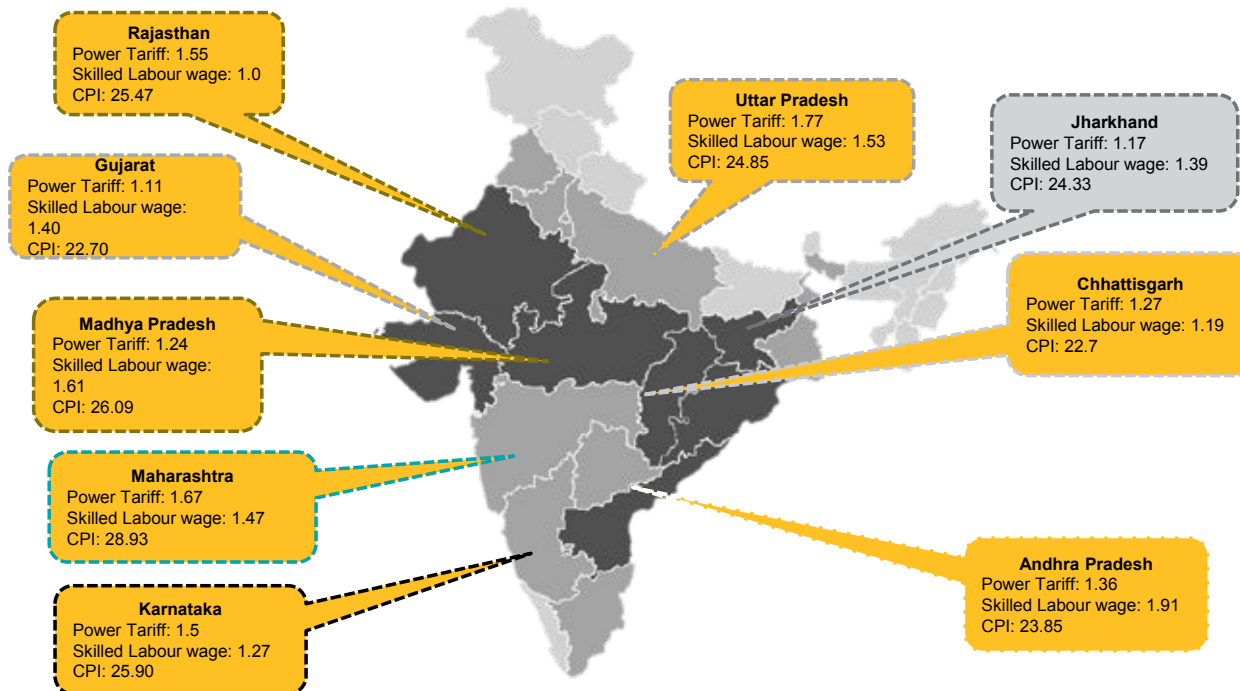


- ✓ Jharkhand is one of the leading states in India in terms of economic growth
 - With a GSDP growth of ~11%, second highest amongst the 20 major states of India

Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME). Clusterisation is being promoted; pollution norms have become more stringent, concept of 'go' and 'no go' zoning has been developed for mining clearances etc.

The Jharkhand Government is working towards improving exports, skill development; mineral based products, handicrafts, handlooms, agriculture and processed food products to ensure increased industrial development across the state. Jharkhand is progressing fast on adopting best practices for making an investor friendly environment in the state to facilitate investments, employment generation and welfare of the people. Measures like Jharkhand Investment Promotion Board, single window clearance, online payments, online verification, third party certifications, self-certification, time bound approvals, availability of information online, standard operating procedures for approvals, deemed approvals, etc. are being adopted by various departments and government agencies.

Jharkhand | Competitive Cost of Doing Business



Note: * Power Tariff and Skilled Labour Wage have been shown as Cost Index with base as 1. CPI is Consumer Price Index of the capital city (For Andhra Pradesh, Vijayawada is considered), sourced from Knowledge Partner



Jharkhand | Educational Infrastructure & Connectivity

Premier Institutions and Development Centers

	Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra		National Institute of Technology
	Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad		XLRI, Jamshedpur
	Indian Institute of Management		National University of Study and Research in Law
	Central University of Jharkhand		National Institute of Foundry and Forge Technology

- National Metallurgical Laboratory, Jamshedpur
- Steel Authority of India Limited, R&D centre
- Metallurgical & Engineering Consultants Limited
- Central Mine Planning and Design Institute
- TATA steel R&D Center

Road connectivity:

- ▶ 15 National Highways (NH) pass through the state
- ▶ Industrial Corridor connecting Ranchi, Dhanbad and Jamshedpur forming a 6 lane Golden Triangle

Rail connectivity:

- ▶ Total 2,294 k.m. of rail route network with 2.87 k.m. rail length per 100 sq. km. area

Air connectivity:

- ▶ Domestic Airport Ranchi - connecting all metros/ major cities
- ▶ Jamshedpur, Dumka, Dhanbad, Bokaro, Giridih, Deoghar, Hazaribagh, Daltonganj and Noamundi also have airstrips
 - Commercial operations for these airports is also on the cards to provide robust regional connectivity

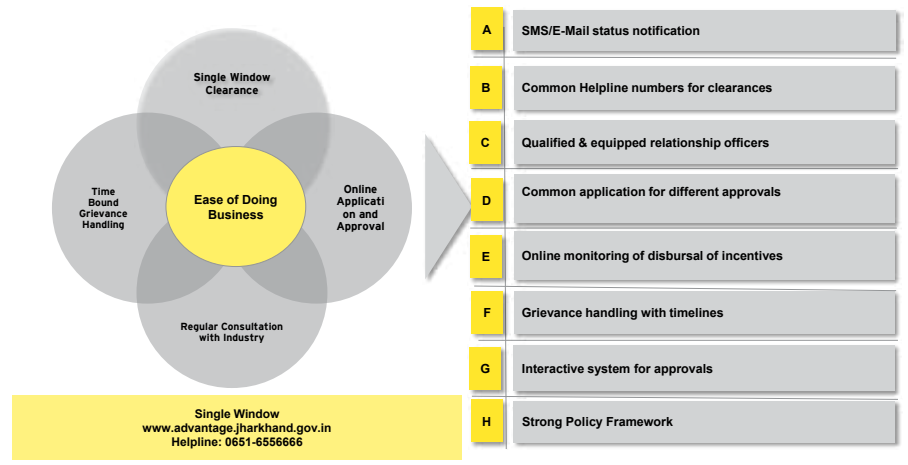


Footwear Industry

India is the second largest footwear producer globally. However, the average per capita footwear consumption is low as compared to the global average. With increasing disposable income, rising middle class and changing consumer preferences, tremendous opportunities exist for the footwear market to grow at a rapid pace going forward.

Steps shall be taken by the Government to support technology up gradation for footwear processing, skilling more people in leather technology and providing all necessary assistance in export of footwear products and entering new markets. Also, efforts shall be made to improve R&D facilities and encourage innovation in the production process and reduce environmental damage.

Jharkhand | Investment Climate



Jharkhand Textile, Apparel and Footwear Policy, 2016 (2/2)

Fiscal Incentives for Textile, Apparel and Footwear Units

Skill Development	Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ One-time support of Rs. 13,000 or actual cost of training, whichever is lower to all employees ▶ Employment generation subsidy of Rs. 5,000 per month per worker for 7 years . Rs. 6,000 for SC/ ST/ Women ▶ Reimbursement of up to Rs. 1000 per person per month to towards expenditure on ESI and EPF for 5 years 	<p>Land allotment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The cost of land can be paid upfront or in 5 equal instalments in five years as per the rules applicable <p>Support for Incubation centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ For setting up of incubation centres, financial support of INR 50 lacs annually for the first 5 years

Bags and accessories

Bags and accessories are another segment in the textiles and apparel sector, which can open up a plethora of opportunities for manufacturers in this sector. With the government restricting the use of plastics and polythene, the demand for cloth and jute bags and related accessories has increased.

The state government shall make efforts to promote this segment in the domestic as well as in the international markets through market development initiatives and assist in training and capacity building of personnel, especially women. Efforts shall also be made to transfer technologies to make the products more durable at low costs.

Handicraft exports

Continued and focused attention will be given to handicrafts to enable the sector to increase both its contribution to exports and its productive employment. Initiatives will include up gradation of skills, creation of better work environment, design and technology

Jharkhand Textile, Apparel and Footwear Policy, 2016 (1/2)

Fiscal Incentives for Textile, Apparel and Footwear Units

20%, upto Rs 50 Crore Capital Investment Subsidy	Up to Rs 10 Lakhs Quality Certification	All incentives of Jhr Export Policy 2015* Export Subsidy
7% or 50% of rates for 7 years, up to 1 Cr Interest Subsidy	Up to Rs 10 Lakhs Patent Registration	50% cost of land up to Rs. 50 lakh Construction of dormitories
100% for 7 years + 40% for next 3 years VAT Subsidy	15% Grant of grant released by Gol Cluster Development	100% exemption for 7 years Electricity Duty
100% reimbursement of stamp duty Stamp duty	50% of power tariff for 7 years Power Tariff	Grant of 50% of project cost up to 7 Cr Footwear Parks

Incentives under Export Policy include: 100% exemption from Electricity Duty, Transport Subsidy of Rs 10 lakh during a financial year, Export Development Assistance, Refund of Certification Charges



Textile, Apparel & Footwear | GoJ Schemes and Measures

Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI)

It has been proposed to set up Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI) in Jharkhand for:

- ▶ Balancing the mismatch of trained manpower requirement in this sector
- ▶ Providing critical support to the Industry in the area of Design, Technology and Management
- ▶ Making industries more competitive, in terms of Design, Cost, Quality and Delivery Time, in the global market

FDDI Campus

- ▶ The campus is proposed to have state-of-the-art facilities - Library, Sports Facilities, Auditorium, Hostels for Boys and Girls, IT Labs etc.
- ▶ It shall offer a vista of courses under different disciplines and ensures adequate opportunities for research, training and development in the highly selective field of Indian fashion industry.



intervention, development of clusters for specific crafts with common service facilities, improvement in infrastructure, and market development.

Jharcraft is a government of Jharkhand undertaking formed to initiate steps to provide sustainable livelihood opportunities in the rural areas, based on sericulture, handloom, handicraft and other allied activities. The seminar held at the venue of India Fashion Week showed the way forward for diverse sectors such as fashion garments, textile and footwear. Subsequently, a first-of-its-kind Business to Government (B2G) meeting was also held at Jharkhand Bhavan, New Delhi at the second half with senior officials from Jharkhand, where government bureaucrats interacted on a one-and-one basis with prospective investors in the state to discuss the way forward for a golden investment opportunity in the state of Jharkhand, focusing on the key pillars of flexible policymaking and enhancing ease of doing business. **SA**

“GO LIVE YOUR DREAM”

RATAN KAUL – A PUBLIC DIPLOMAT

Connoisseurs do opine that women make grander businesspersons than men, some are of the opinion that women take calculated risks, less prone to over-confidence, more likely to take the long-term view and are more consultative and seek consensual views.

Ratan Kaul, Diplomat, from being the Vice President - Indian Council of UN Relations (ICURN) and Vice President, Indian Council of Human Relations (ICHR) has come a long way from just being a homemaker and proved herself beyond doubt in all spheres of life. Awarded Ambassador of Peace by Universal Peace Federation, Outstanding Woman Social Activist by Russian Culture, she has a lot on her platter. Ratan Shares her thoughts with S&A's Dipika Chopra.

Your journey so far?

As with all long journeys, it has been a roller coaster ride. Many highs, achievements, matched with setbacks and surprises.

Greatest obstacle you have faced in achieving success?

Dealing with attention-seeking wannabes has been the biggest obstacle. It is tedious to keep on having to sift wheat from chaff at every step of the way.

What do you think is the key to professional success for women in India?

Rules for success for any gender in any profession and anywhere in the world are the same – sincerity, integrity and dedication



(L to R) Ratan Kaul, Maneka Gandhi, Parull Mahaajan



Ratan Kaul

How would you define women empowerment?

Self-reliance is empowering. This enables a woman to hold her head high. One can command respect with one's conduct and attitude.

Your opinion on women in terms of mental ability and shoulder responsibilities?

The Scriptures describe the Devi or Goddess as 'Ashtabhujā', the eight armed one. Women are mentally wired to multi-task with ease, juggle domesticity with professional life. This truly sums up the essence of a woman and sets her apart from the other gender.

Do you think a woman entrepreneur in general needs to have certain set of skills to start and run her business successfully?

Any entrepreneur requires the same set of skills – focus, hard work, discipline, clarity and a good business plan.

Your opinion as to why women sometimes differ from men?

The male of the species is from Mars and the female is from Venus. Naturally they are different. So is their perspective and perceptions.

Is there a difference between how women of different classes see their roles in society?

The glass-ceiling that divided the classes has been shattered. Happily, I see that the mindsets of people have become more fluid and disregardful of class and caste differences. Women have attained success in many fields and changed their lives and circumstance.



Ratan Kaul felicitating Naina Lal Kidwai



Ratan Kaul, M.J. Akbar, Rita Khanna

Advice would you give young women who want to follow a similar path as you?

Go live your dream.

What is the biggest way in which you see women helping women reach empowerment?

I have always believed that those in the position of advantage should extend a helping hand and have an attitude of generosity. A bit of hand holding goes a long way in empowerment.

Looking back, can you tell us about your greatest highlights so far?

There have been many highs. I have worked with Captains of Industry, Heads of State, and earned their respect. It has been a long journey of personal growth.

Have there been challenging times of doubts about your profession?

Not really. I have always been very clear and balanced my responsibilities well. I attribute my success to my father, who gave me the confidence, vision and guidance.



Ratan Kaul, Meenakashi Lekhi, Parull Mahajan



Ratan Kaul, Aishwarya (Daughter of Rajnikant)

Reverse mentoring between the older and younger is also the need of the day, to bring up to speed with the newer technologies and developments.

Do you think women's empowerment will lead to social development?

Of course it will. A society where the women are literate and self-reliant will be the richer for it. They will raise a healthier generation, with a more constructive and positive mind set.

Your plans for the future?

The journey goes on. New doors open and many alliances happen on an ongoing basis. I am also ideating on co-authoring a book, which we are hoping to have ready by early 2018. **S&A**

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Like a Gladiator

Welcome to the glam side of the spectrum. Flats, heel, studs, knots all these makes them a good bet for summer nights out and about.

Curated by: Dipika Chopra



Perfect pair of statement



Knotty by nature



Pic courtesy: glamradar.com

Summer fix



Pic courtesy: lookastic.com

Notoriously noticeable



Sunset love



Sun-ready

Pic courtesy: ootdchannel.com



Edgy twist

Pic courtesy: shutterstock



Gladiator love

Pic courtesy: shutterstock



Pic courtesy: stylesweekly.com

Liven up your look



Style it up

Pic courtesy: trendyfaste.com



Overly exciting

Pic courtesy: wordpress.com



*Minimalism—
the biggest trend*

Amazon India F Autumn/Winter



Fashion Week 2017

The Amazon India Fashion Week Autumn/Winter 2017 held at the Nehru Stadium, New Delhi from March 15-18 2017 was an interesting and colourful blend of clothes, and footwear, which played a major role in completing the collections. There was a marked Autumn/Winter vibe with boots and booties being quite prominent but there were also some very feminine and elegant styles for women, which ensured that the total look was just right for formal as well as casual wear.

— by MEHER CASTELINO

Surprisingly, there were not many designers who felt that handbags should be given prominence for the Autumn/Winter season. Except for designers like Abraham & Thakore who displayed practical bags for the busy executives, Samant Chauhan who showed some really stylish and rugged bags for men, and Tarun Tahiliani for his formal wear ethnic wear; most designers made it a point to concentrate on shoes.

Accessories were impressive but in unconventional designs that moved far away from the traditional look. Size was the important factor for most of the jewellery that was displayed, which ensured that 'Big is Beautiful' for some designers.



Fashionable Footsteps

Nothing completes a look better than footwear and designers ensured that their creations were carefully balanced with the right kind of shoes. Made from leather or fabrics, the stylish and sporty footwear were seen regularly on the ramp, with at times even women's wear being accessorised with heavy-duty foot gear.



Abraham and Thakore presented a stark black and white story with a hint of red for the garments, with the collection called "Back to Work". The footwear was a female version of the black/white block heel styles inspired by men's 1920's designs of black cap toe oxford two-toned lace-up brogues. Movies like the Great Gatsby and Downton Abbey brought this style back in focus for men and women. Some of the styles for the collection were also inspirations from the mojris of the past. Completing the look of the ensembles were leather laptop sleeves and handbags created by NappaDori that matched the look.



Abraham and Thakore



Novita Yunus

The Jakarta show presented by Novita Yunus was a great mix of footwear and accessories. Very wide wedges were balanced with pastel blue or beige broad dualstraps but it was the jewellery that made an eye-catching statement. Giant metallic pendants at the centre of large beaded chains or interesting baubles were linked together as neckpieces and teamed with gold metallic wide cuffs. A large impressive dish-like centre-piece gleamed in the middle of black ribbons for the neck. Here it was apparent that size played a major role in the accessories, while the footwear was kept very uniform in design.



Madhu Jain

Madhu Jain who displayed her collection after several decades paid homage to ikat, Patola and traditional brocades so it was simple black flats or mojris that fitted perfectly into the collection, which had a marked Indian vintage look. Nothing looks more delicately feminine than the mojris, which are not only stylish but spell feminine comfort.



Anupama Dayal

Anupama Dayal's flat colourful beachsandals were just right for her "Mangar" village collection that had a rustic charm about it. Anupama's accessories were a mix of floral necklaces and earrings, matched with colourful scarves. Hand crafted long swirls with origami like forms dangled from one ear, while bandanas added style to the hair.



Hemant and Nandita

Designer duo Hemant and Nandita brought Autumn / Winter elegance for their collection "Dynamism" with footwear that was inspired by ballet point shoes but was now reworked and were offered with pencil heels with white ankle socks or they brought in laced up ankle booties in neutral shades of beige for other creations.



Calling their collection "Telefunk" inspired by geometrics of the bars during the television test patterns, the footwear by **Pankaj and Nidhi** was just peep toe lace-up black booties or stylish platform peep toe stilettos that matched the black and white abstract patterns on the garments.



Patine's "EclecticFolklore" line created ankle length, laced up, pointed toe stiletto footwear in beige or black that was ultra feminine. Here was a gentle mix of the booties with the very stylish evening shoes.



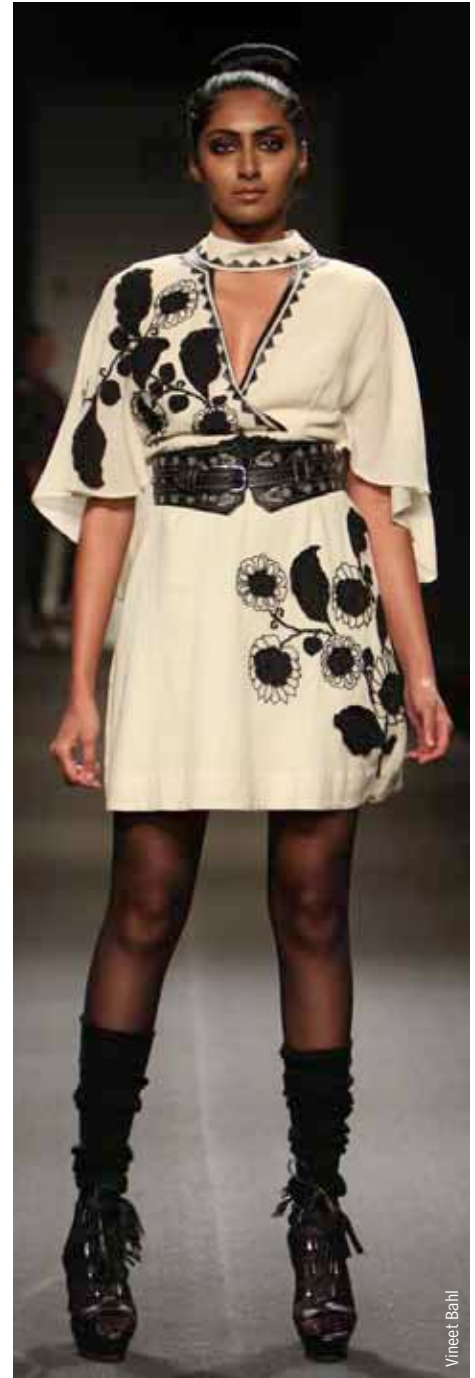
Pero's line had a mix of diverse elements from China and Latin America with hints of Kullu and Himachal Pradesh. So there was a fashionable mix of knee high lace stockings with black ankle length booties for all the garments.



Rina Dhaka's "Dark Romance" was elegantly stylish with net stockings that ended with black ankle length boots, which proved to be the best choice when in doubt about what to wear during the cooler climes.



It was the "Golden Threads of Assam" that featured in Samant Chauhan's collection, so the designer brought the beauty of the Assamese weaves and matched them with leather boots for men and women along with mini suit cases, totes, postman bags, duffels and satchels in shades of brown leather.



Calling his collection "Code" Vineet Bahl had the black platform multi-strapped open toe shoes that fitted in the look but at times were worn with rolled up leg warmers.



The label **Ashima Leena's** "Charuksha" collection was an Indo-west fusion story with striking prints so the soft printed moccasin styles with heels for the feet were just right for the look.



Malini Ramani gave her "Nomad" collection inspired by gypsies and desert hues an interesting, varying touch with mini, strappy, black, stiletto, gladiators, which are making a sly comeback on the fashion charts but with a hint of feminine flavour. Malini then moved to the ethnic look with cork, wedged, black, thong, sandals and even brought in block heel laceups.



Namrata Joshipura unleashed glamour on the ramp with stylish one-strap stilettos in black on one hand for the sultry gowns; or gold and white sneakers for a sportier look. Namrata's extreme choice in footwear proved that her wide range of garments smoothly moved from the casual outdoor look to the very Red Carpet dramatic styles featuring the sexy gowns.



Sahil Kochhar

Sahil Kochhar's "Kyari" collection was pretty and feminine but his footwear choice was chunky and heavy with laced up ankle high army boots or beige peep toe platform booties. Bringing contrasts through footwear has been the style norm for many designers. Blending the fragile feminine clothing with the masculine heavy shoes brings an almost androgynous look to the collection.



Wendell

From Wendell Rodricks it was "TheCubist Rose" collection that had jewellery to match it created by Ayesha Accessories. The metallic angular earrings and neckpieces were ideal for the layered geometric garments in dazzling colours, while the silver block heel open toe shoes added further dazzle to the ensembles.



Guapa

Guapa's creations titled "Randomness" were a story in stripes so the footwear was restricted to simple gold sneakers while Ilk for its collection "ATTN" had marked military tones and preferred to show black patent leather sneakers with the regimental look.



Munkee.See Munkee.Doo

The **Munkee.See Munkee.Doo** label stuck to black pointed kitten heels or black/beige platform ones with ankle straps. They also added white, wide, strapped, flat sandals for added comfort.



Pawan Sachdeva

Pawan Sachdeva for his unisex line felt black moccasins were ideal for both sexes but Sahil Aneja stuck to plain white sneakers for his Autumn/Winter 2017 men's wear collection.



Dhruv Vaish

Dhruv Vaish brought his "Noire" collection for men and women in shades of grey teamed with silver tipped white sneakers or black laceups. Sneakers seem to have proved their popularity for the Autumn/Winter 2017 season for many designers who had them in colours and hints of shimmer.



Tarun Tahiliani and Amit Aggarwal



Tarun Tahiliani and Amit Aggarwal

The Grand Finale reserved for **Tarun Tahiliani and Amit Aggarwal** revealed the ideal Guru Shishya touch. While Amit worked with rich Indian textiles, his footwear comprised transparent stilettos edged with gold. For jewellery he felt minimalism was just right for the armllets, angular earrings and neckpieces that were impressive but subdued.

Tarun Tahiliani for his luxurious festive collection had flat feathery mojris or T-strap pointed stilettos. Neckpieces, earrings and bracelets were the perfect addition for the creations. Beaded potli bags were designed to match the colour and patterns of the formal wear drapes in the collection.

Striking Accessories

Accessories like jewellery and scarves are part of every season but while the Autumn/Winter session does not give much scope to the jewellery or accessories because of the slightly heavy silhouettes of the garments, there were a few designers who brought their stylish looks for accessories that added to the beauty of the garments.



Pallavi Singhee

Pallavi Singhee's "Foliage" collection was accessorized with the tasseled printed scarves or cloth belts, while at times the designer also ensured that there were fabrics that acted as neck ornaments and the beaded foot/toe accents gave an innovative, rustic, feminine, touch to bare feet.



Shivan and Narresh

Shivan and Narresh the masters of the resort wear section brought in some colourful jewellery that added to the look of their holiday and festive line, which could work as destination bridal wear too. Using crystals and topaz with onyx, resin and metallic hardware for collars, chokers, and pendants; the designing duo ensured that there was a wide selection, for the lady when she turns into a bride and walks down the aisle on the most important day of her life.

THE GAME CHANGER

Women Appreciation Awards (WAA) 2017



Amit & Nikita Arya

"WOMEN TODAY ARE LEADING IN ALL WALKS OF LIFE, THIS AWARD GIVES A REASON TO CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT OF WOMEN POWER. THEY ARE THE REAL ARCHITECTS OF THE SOCIETY."

– Nikita Arya -CEO, The Fairytale's's



Bahaar Rohatgi



Anubha Dawar

Women have come to the fore, working hard to prove their worth and showcase their enviable talent in all fields.

Women Appreciation Awards 2017 ,hosted by AMIT & NIKITA ARYA (CEO, Fairytale's's) rewarded and recognized the contribution of those women who work tirelessly in their respective fields and contribute and play as leaders in the society.



Asma Gulzar



Christine Samandari & Haroon Yusuf



Dina Ismail



Parull Mahaajan & H.E. Nejmeddine Lakhel



Divya Dutta

Hosted on March 21st, 2017 at Taj Ambassador, New Delhi and graced by eminent personalities of global reputation., the event witnessed a very high quality footfall and number of influencers of the society. The highlights of the event was a panel discussion on Woman Empowerment participated by society stalwarts, H.E. Nejmeddine Lakhel (Ambassador of Tunisia), Shri Haroon Yusuf (Former Delhi State Minister), Dr. Janice Darbari (Head of Missions, Montenegro), sharing some notable insights and inspirational talks. The exclusive comedy act by Sarlaa Penji aka Amit Talwar was greatly appreciated by the audience.



Dolly Parekh & Lakshmi



Dr. Sangita Chauhan



Preeti Puja & Dr. Janice Darbari



Harsh Singh



Malvika Kaura



Gaganpreet Kapoor & Raashi Anand



Sarlaa Penji



payal jain



Madhavi Advani & Shalini Arora Kochhar



Shilpa Wahal



Nidhi, Nitin & Samyra Chadha



Nupur Kundu & Ratan Kaul



Muskaan Aggarwal



Varun Katyal, Akaash Aggarwal, Rochikaa Aggarwal

The awards felicitation ceremony of the event was kick-started by Bollywood Actress Divya Dutta. Some of the awardees were ParullMahaajan (social activist), Nupur Kundu (Artist), Renu Hussain (Educationist), Christine Samandari (Co-founder La'Opera), Suparna Trikha (Beauty & Wellness Expert), Shalini Arora Kochhar (Social Influencer), Preeti Puja (Associate Editor Ravishing Magazine) & many more. **S&A**



Sarikaa Dhawan



Sheenu Madan



Ruchika Arora

Red Carpet Arrivals

All the celebrity dresses and fashion at the **Oscars 2017**
Curated by: Dipika Chopra

↑ Actress **Ruth Negga** stole the show in a Gothic-inspired stunning red dress, custom-made for the actress by Valentino. An elegant high-neck and long sleeves gown looked delicate in the sheer material .

Priyanka Chopra graced the red carpet in a beautiful Ralph & Russo tulle strapless gown. The ivory white column creation with a structured and square deep-split corset accentuated her curves to perfection. She complemented her look with a pair of \$5 million 60 carat Lorraine Schwartz diamond drop earrings and chunky bracelets on both wrists. ↓



↑ Actress **Naomie Harris** stepped out in a white strapless sequin gown designed by Raf Simons for Calvin Klein at the 2017 Oscars, paired with yellow suede sandals with asymmetrical crystal straps from CK's fall 2017 collection. She also wore Bulgari diamond drop earrings.



↑ The *Lion* actor **Dev Patel** has aced everything from standard penguin suits to swervy navy tuxes this awards season, and this streamlined ivory dinner jacket feels like the perfect way to cap off Patel's successful red carpet run.

Emma Stone made her grand entrance to the Oscars in style! The *'La La Land'* star wowed everyone on the red carpet in a 1920s-inspired gold gown. This is definitely Emma's best red carpet look EVER! ↓





↑ **Justin Timberlake** and **Jessica Biel**'s 2017 Oscars outfits were super unique and coordinated flawlessly. Timberlake hit the 2017 Oscars red carpet wearing a very classic Tom Ford black tux with a black bow-tie. Jessica wore a beautiful floor length gold and silver Kaufman Franco dress with a bold tiffany collar.



↑ Actress **Olivia Culpo**'s looked ravishing in the beaded creation, envisioned by Georgina Chapman and Keren Craig of Marchesa. The gown was inspired by Water.

The Vinyl **Olivia Wilde** bared major cleavage in her sexy Valentino gown. And let's not forget — Olivia's Oscar dress was totally backless! ↓



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She walks, She leads

Malvika Sehgal Kaura



A designer, artist, entrepreneur, travel enthusiast and a makeover queen, MALVIKA SEHGAL KAURA's insatiable hunger for innovative design is evidenced by her own personal style. As an image consultant, she has created value in the lives of many individuals, male and female, through radio, TV, personal makeovers, corporate lectures and workshops.

Describe your personal sense of style.

My personal sense of style is statement and extremely slimming. Attributing to my specializing in making women look slimmer, it comes to me naturally. Statement would be in accessories, make-up

Your daily wardrobe?

My daily wardrobe in summer is a classic dress and in winters stockings, jacket and boots. Since my days tend to stretch, leaving no

time to change, my daily outfit is such that it transforms from a day look to a party look.

Your favourite formal look is made up of?

My favorite formal look is a saree, nothing more classier or sensuous.

Which are your favourite stores for accessories?

My favourite accessories stores are:
 ▶ Malvika Sehgal Kaura (my own

brand of belts, jewellery and odhnis) Clarks (for comfortable footwear)
 ▶ Gucci/Louis Vuitton/ Ferragamo/Roberto Cavalli/ Sabyasachi for their bags, sunglasses and footwear

Is your appearance / style important to you?

My appearance and style are of paramount importance to my mood, my sense of self, both in work and for myself

How do you react to trends?

I love trends. I study and adapt them for myself, my clients and my collection but I don't fall prey!!

A trend you would never be seen wearing?

I wouldn't wear any unflattering trend like black/ blue lipstick, dark under eye make up, tied up hair, tattoos, shapeless garments.

What has been your biggest wardrobe binge, so far

My bags are by far my biggest wardrobe investment, followed closely by my shawls, sunglasses and footwear.

The watch you wear for an evening about town?

My Omega constellation is my current favourite watch.

Your favourite brand?

My favorite brand is Louis Vuitton.

Accessories you like collecting

I collect bags, sunglasses, shoes, boots. In numbers my footwear would probably be the most

Which is your favourite shopping destination

My favourite shopping destination is my studio, which comprises the best cuts and colours with the statement accessories to match.

Shoes/accessory brand that you would love to see in India

I wish Sophia Webster starts selling in stores in India.

Favourite shoe brand?

Ferragamo and Fendi makes stylish shoes coupled with comfort.

What's your one vice?

Desserts are my vice. I have a huge sweet tooth.

Your fear?

I fear myself, my temper and its repercussions. I admire calm women the most, its a tough life and to keep a cool head is paramount.

What do you think is your most valuable trait?

My most valuable trait you should ask others, I think it's my smiling against all odds **S&A**



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Quote-Unquote

“

We need to get women to the point where they aren't apologizing. It's time to take ownership in our success.

Tory Burch
CEO and Designer, Tory Burch



“

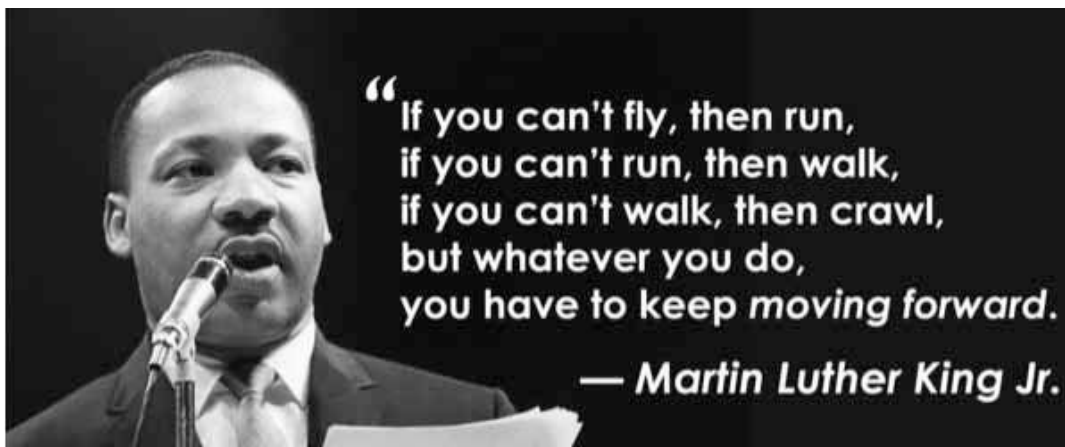
I want every little girl who's told she's bossy, to be told instead she has leadership skills.

Sheryl Sandberg
Chief Operating Officer, Facebook



“Look within. I always believe you have enough to start from where you are.”

Oprah Winfrey



“

Success isn't about how much money you make, it's about the difference you make in people's lives.

Michelle Obama
First African American First Lady of the United States



“

If people are doubting how far you can go, go so far that you can't hear them anymore.

Michele Ruiz
President and CEO, The Scripps

“

If you don't know what your passion is, realize that one reason for your existence on earth is to find it.

Corrah Winfrey
Media Producer and Philanthropist



I NEVER DREAMED ABOUT SUCCESS. I WORKED FOR IT.

-Lela Lauder



“Women are as capable as men and this needs to be the focus of our education, that women can be whatever they want to be.”

- DJ Zilkie
Co-founder, PU3E Academy

Don't take rest after ur first victory. because if u fail in second , more lips are waiting to say, that ur first victory was just luck

Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam



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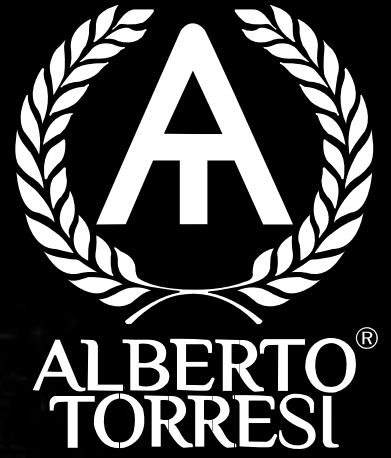
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